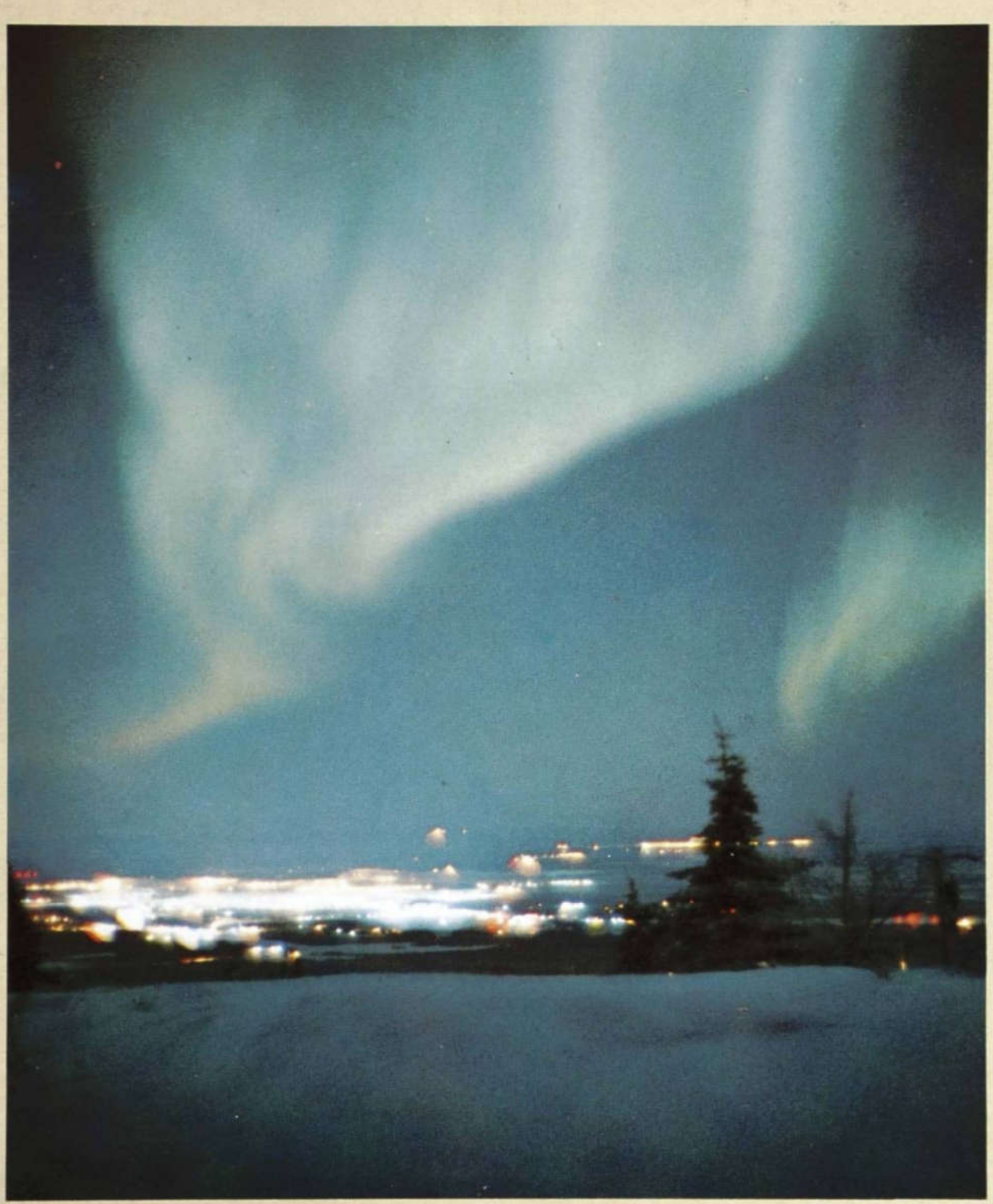
The Beaver

SUMMER 1968



B. M. LITTELJOHN

An old Hudson Bay coasting vessel is moved from Moosonee to Moose Factory Island where it was put on display as a Centennial Year project. Upper Canada College student, Alastair McCluskey, observes the operation from the vantage point of a skidoo.

The Beaver

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Aurora Borealis in an extensive band system above Fairbanks, Alaska. Photo by George Cresswell

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THE AURORA

And the Northern Lights in the crystal nights came forth with a mystic gleam.
They danced and they danced the devil-dance over the naked snow;
And soft they rolled like a tide upshoaled with a ceaseless ebb and flow.
They rippled green with a wondrous sheen, they fluttered out like a fan;
They spread with a blaze of rose-pink rays never yet seen of man.
They writhed like a brood of angry snakes, hissing and sulphur pale;
Then swift they changed to a dragon vast, lashing a cloven tail.

BY VALERIE GIRLING ETHIER

The author is a geologist with a wide interest in the physical sciences. The photographs of a variety of rayed bands were taken at Churchill by Dr R. Montalbetti.

THOSE LINES FROM *The Ballad of the Northern Lights**, by Robert Service, are probably the most vivid description of the aurora in our language. Service referred to the aurora in many of his sagas of the north; its beauty and mystery must have moved him deeply.

The aurora fascinates physicists even more than it did Service, although the modern scientific approach is vastly more analytical—if less poetic. A modest observation program that began in the Canadian arctic in 1932 has grown steadily; Canada now has a sound international reputation in auroral research. And as a subject for Canadian research, nothing could be more fitting than the aurora; it is as much our own as Niagara Falls, and certainly a more typical symbol of Canada than the maple leaf. It's in our own back yard.

The aurora is at home over two belts, the auroral zones, ringing the north and south geomagnetic poles. (These are the poles of our total magnetic field, including the vast volume of space influenced by the earth. The magnetic pole, on the other hand, is simply the place your compass needle points if you are walking on the surface of the earth.) The north geomagnetic pole is over northwestern Greenland. Because the geomagnetic poles are off-centre, the auroral zones are tilted too: the northern auroral zone swings along the fringe of Siberia, across the top of Norway and the southern tip of Greenland, over Hudson Bay, the Northwest Territories, and northern Alaska. The people of Churchill may see an aurora nearly every clear night. The southern auroral zone passes over part of Antarctica and nearby oceans, so Canada is the only large land area in an auroral zone. In a sense, the upper atmosphere comes to focus over northern Canada—and the aurora is the visible picture you get from that focus.

During a big aurora, radio communications are disrupted, electricity surges in the high atmosphere, microphones pick up noises you can't hear, invisible radio stars "twinkle", and in the dark wastes the night is filled with a moving blaze of light.

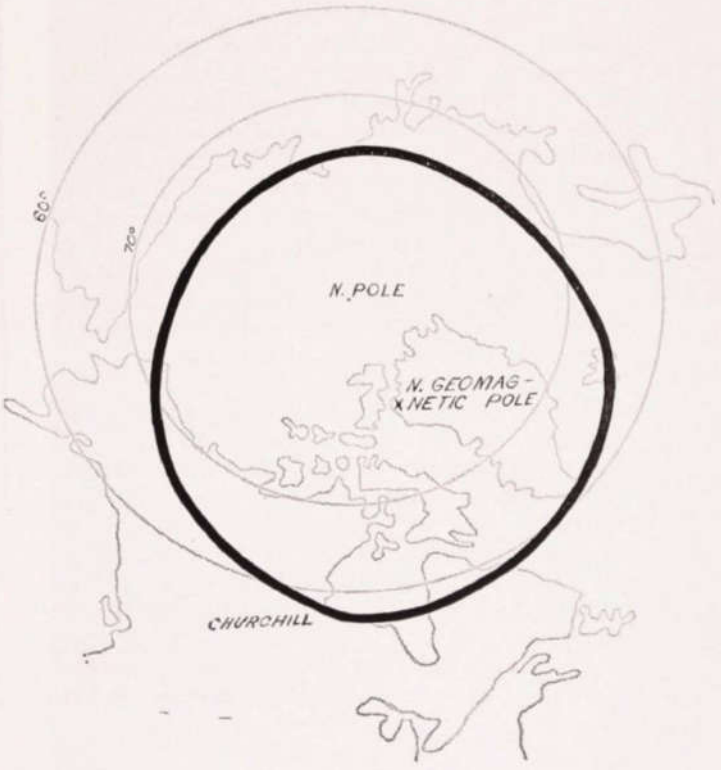
A big aurora is ghostly, and splendid; some Eskimos believed the aurora was a spirit light to guide the dying to paradise. While poets like Service described the shapes, movements and colours of the aurora as if it were a living thing, scientists are more detached. They see two general forms. The first is the wide shimmering arc or band standing in the sky, 60 to 75 miles up. It's usually pale green, sometimes red-tinged. The second type is the ray structure—the light makes a pattern of vertical streaks that seem to move, creating a dancing curtain of light. (TV cameras have clocked the apparent movement as fast as 60 miles a second.) The ray structures begin about 65 miles up, and very rarely may extend to 600 miles. Often the aurora you see is a blending of the two types. On a typical night, the aurora begins as an arc near the northern horizon. As the hours pass it becomes a movement of rays; it climbs until the flashing rays meet in the roof of the sky. Then it breaks up and fades back to an arc in the north, as it began.

* * * *

How does it happen? The last ten years of quickening research have given the scientists a fairly clear idea of what happens, although they still cannot fully answer the "how" and "why" of it.

It begins with the sun, which is always throwing electrically charged material into space; about a million tons of gas leave its surface every second. Made up mostly of protons and electrons, this gas streams out at supersonic speed across the solar system, at least as far as Saturn and perhaps beyond. This is the solar wind—

The northern auroral zone.



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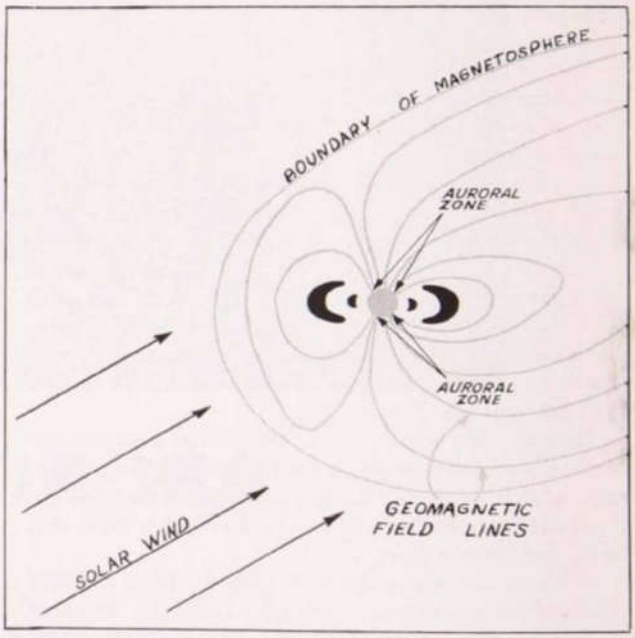
the moving atmosphere of the sun, as vital as it is deadly to us. We circle within it.

The geomagnetic field of the earth, instead of extending outward like a big invisible ball of charged particles, is moulded by the solar wind into an immense tear-drop shape with the earth as its tiny spinning nucleus. The wind pushes the geomagnetic field closer to the earth on the sunlit side, and bends it into a long comet-style tail on the dark side. The magnetosphere, as it's called, is this invisible envelope under the magnetic spell of the earth.

Since 1958, satellites have been charting the size and shape of the magnetosphere and measuring what goes on there. The results have etched a whole new picture of the upper atmosphere and beyond. Here charged particles (protons and electrons) are trapped, most of them in two shells, the Van Allen radiation belts, thousands of miles above the equator but arching down nearer the poles. In these belts the particles dart back and forth between the polar regions, making a round trip every few seconds.

Scientists now believe the aurora is caused by a reaction between the solar wind and the magnetosphere. The aurora is one symbol of our loneliness: the nearest planets, Mars and Venus, do not have magnetic fields so can have no auroras.

The chain of events that leads to a big aurora begins with a solar storm. An eruption on the surface of the sun



The magnetosphere: the earth's geomagnetic field is distorted by the solar wind into an elongated tear-drop shape. Inner and outer Van Allen belts, containing trapped particles, are shown black. The aurora occurs at high altitudes along the trapping zone boundary.

flings a mighty batch of invisible material into space with tremendous energy. Radiation travelling as fast as light reaches the earth eight minutes later. X-rays blast into the atmosphere, upsetting the charged layers that reflect our radio signals, so radio reception is weakened. The electrons and protons thrown out in the flare travel a path like a coiled spring, arriving near the earth a day or two later. The magnetosphere is distorted and begins to fluctuate when it is hit by this heavy stream of particles moving at 600 miles a second. The particles spiral down the lines of the magnetic field into the polar regions, the home of the aurora. As the magnetosphere shrinks under the onslaught, the polar funnels expand, and the aurora is seen over two broadened bands above the earth. During a big storm the aurora is distended until it is often far south of the northern auroral zone.

When the atoms and molecules in the atmosphere are bombarded by this volley of electrons from above, you see the light of the aurora. The collisions excite the atmospheric atoms and molecules to higher energy states; as each returns to its normal state it gives off light. (Something crudely similar happens in a fluorescent light fixture.) You see the commonest colours of the aurora, pale green and red, when atmospheric oxygen is struck.

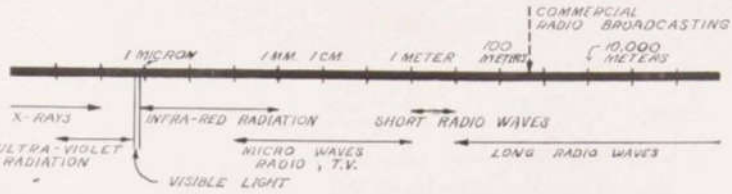
Canadian physicists have pioneered ground-based study of wave lengths and brightness of light from the aurora, and used the light to draw detailed temperature profiles of the upper atmosphere.

As an aid to ground observation, rockets are now a vital part of auroral research. Since the rocket range was built at Churchill, Manitoba, in 1957 it has been used by the National Research Council, the Defence Research Board, and a number of Canadian university research teams, as well as various American groups. The Canadians are using the Black Brant, an efficient little work-horse rocket made in Winnipeg. Rockets are popular because they can carry the instruments to the height of the aurora—60 to 100 miles up. Balloons, although much cheaper, will rise only about 30 miles. Satellites, on the other hand, are too high: if they orbit less than 100 miles up they meet too much air drag and fall back. The rocket is no poor relative of the satellite—the know-how for sub-orbital flight is just about as sophisticated as that for getting into orbit.

To launch a rocket costs about $50,000: $25,000 for the rocket vehicle and as much again for the payload. All this equipment must be written off. To launch a 50-pound balloon payload costs about $1,000: less than $500 for the balloon itself and about $300 for the helium to lift it, but the big difference is that the instruments can be recovered and used again. Although balloons will not lift instruments into the visible aurora, they can be used to measure some unseen effects of bombardment that penetrate to lower levels. Balloon-flown instruments have been measuring, for instance, short infra-red emissions that cannot be studied from the ground because they are absorbed by the atmosphere.

Many people say they have heard rustling noises during an aurora. Scientists are sceptical. If there really is any sound, they reason, it surely cannot come directly all the way from the aurora. But your senses tell you only part of the story. Your eyes react to certain wave lengths in the spectrum, and you see light. In the same way, your ears are sensitive to only a limited range of sounds; anything above or below this range you do not hear. Subsonic "sounds", or pressure waves, have been recorded by ground microphones in Alaska during auroras. The reason for these pressure waves is unknown, although some physicists speculate that the incoming solar particles pick up some kind of pulsation they can transfer to the atmosphere, and that this is what the microphones have recorded.

Some people have noticed that big auroras are often seen before a high cloud veil forms. Can the aurora affect weather? It is possible, although to think that the aurora will sometime be used in weather forecasting is wild



Part of the spectrum, showing wave lengths from x-rays to long radio waves. Each unit on the scale is ten times larger than the one to its left.

speculation. The visible aurora is usually at least 60 miles up and "weather" as we know it is restricted to the bottom ten miles of the atmosphere. But since balloons have found x-rays and infra-red radiation well below auroras, the unseen influences of bombardment extend closer to the earth than the light does. So far there is no evidence for extra-terrestrial influence on weather, but it is still an open question.

The sun has an 11-year activity cycle, with the restless periods marked by more and bigger sunspots and flares, giving rise to spectacular auroras. The last peak was during the International Geophysical Year (1957-58). For reasons unknown the peak of auroral activity lags about a year behind the solar peak: the sun reached its most quiet phase in 1964-65, but the aurora is still somewhat subdued. A quiet period in the upper atmosphere does not mean the physicists can relax. They use this lull to build a better base line for measuring the big auroras of the next active period.

Signals of the wave lengths used for radio communication are normally reflected from electrically charged layers in the ionosphere. The bombardment from above by charged particles, which causes an aurora, also increases the charge in these layers. Because of the imbalance, our radio waves are absorbed and weakened instead of reflected, and we have a radio "blackout". The absorption does not affect only man-made radio signals. Some stars emit little or no light, but may send out natural radiation at radio wave lengths; during an aurora, part of their signal is absorbed by our disturbed atmosphere, so that the signal we do get wavers. To the instruments these stars "twinkle" in a very real sense. The same thing happens to the radio signals sent from satellites.

Although the ionospheric layers do not reflect long radio waves normally, the aurora itself will reflect short radio and radar waves. (Ham radio operators can bounce their signals off the aurora, giving them longer transmission range.) The beam is returned because the region is ionized, or electrically charged. Physicists are now charting the pattern of this ionization in the aurora. "Radio auroras", as such echoes are called, are crudely associated with visible auroras, but are also found during the day. Satellites have in fact measured a constant stream of electrons coming into the atmosphere; scientists conclude that an aurora in the broad sense is always present, although it may be too weak for you to see.

Some philosopher-scientist has rephrased an idea from Shelley into a modern epigram: "The larger the island of our knowledge, the longer the shoreline of our wonder". This applies to the aurora, because the big question of what actually happens as the solar wind particles hit the magnetosphere is still unanswered.

When solar particles are added to the Van Allen belts, some particles spill out at the ends, which hover roughly over the auroral zones. Some physicists think this spill-over is related to the aurora. However, satellites indicate that not enough particles are dumped out of the Van Allen belts to fuel the aurora for more than a few minutes. And the radio aurora, at least, is not a "big bang" at the end of a build-up, but a continuous and steady process.

Maybe the particles come directly from the solar wind, down the funnel of the magnetic field lines into the polar regions. The problem with this theory is that the protons and electrons of the solar wind do not have enough energy to penetrate deep into the upper atmosphere and still have power left to cause atmospheric bombardment. They are travelling about 600 miles a second when they reach the magnetosphere, but nearly 2500 miles a second in the aurora itself. Something must boost their energy, but what it is, scientists just don't know yet.

"If we knew how the solar particles get into the magnetosphere in the first place, we might know what accelerates them," mused one physicist. The shoreline of his wonder is still hidden in the shimmering veils that light our north. ◆

RICHARD HARRINGTON

THE MERRY DANCERS

Lest all the romance be taken from the northern lights here are some different interpretations of their beauty.

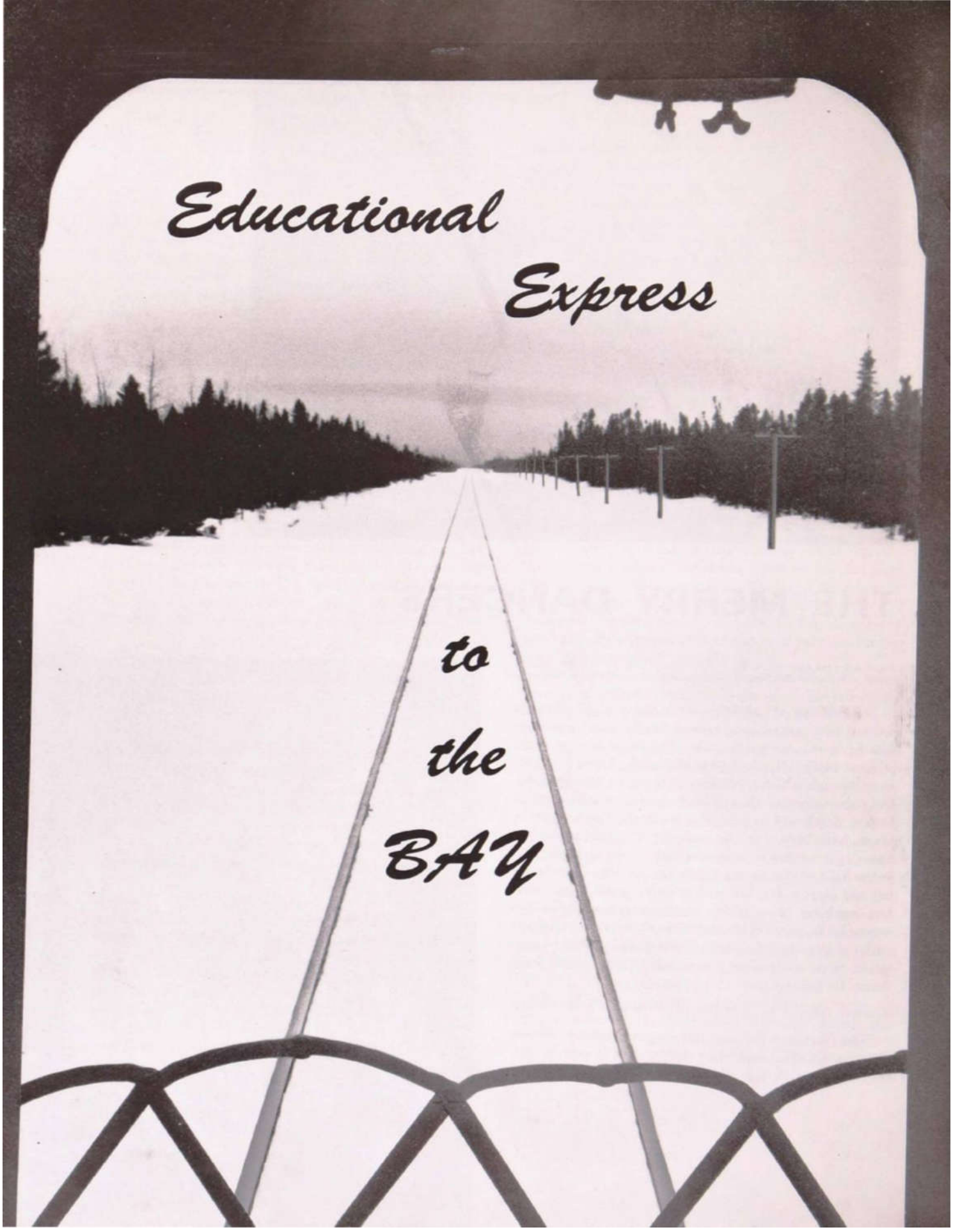
The Eskimos of Labrador, according to E. W. Hawkes writing fifty years ago, believe the highest heaven is located in the Aurora Borealis. The sky is a great dome of hard material arched over the earth. There is a hole in it through which the spirits pass to the true heavens. Only the spirits of those who have died a voluntary or violent death and women who die in childbirth, and the raven, have been over this pathway. The spirits who live there light torches to guide the feet of new arrivals. This is the light of the aurora. They can be seen there feasting and playing football with a walrus skull. The whistling crackling noise which sometimes accompanies the aurora is the voices of these spirits trying to communicate with the people of the earth. They should always be answered in a whispering voice. Youths and small boys dance to the aurora.

Samuel Hearne in 1772 recorded these Indian beliefs:

"The Northern Indians [Chipewyans] call the *Aurora Borealis*, Ed-thin; and when that meteor is very bright, they say that deer is plentiful in that part of the atmosphere; . . . Their ideas in this respect are founded on a principle one would not imagine. Experience has shewn them, that when a hairy deer-skin is briskly stroked with the hand in a dark night, it will emit many sparks of electrical fire, as the back of a cat will. The idea the Southern Indians [Cree] have of this meteor is equally romantic, though more pleasing, as they believe it to be the spirits of their departed friends dancing in the clouds; and when *Aurora Borealis* is remarkably bright, at which time they vary most in colour, form, and situation, they say, their deceased friends are very merry."

The Timiskaming Algonquin Indians, reported by F. G. Speck in 1915, had another theory:

"The Northern Lights are called wa't.e 'illumination'. They are caused by the waves splashing against the rocky shores of the northern seas (James Bay), which produce a sort of reflected glow. The seething noise which is sometimes heard when the aurora is visible is attributed to the grinding of the rocks and gravel along the shore of the sea driven by the action of water and wind in the north. The Indians here think that within two days after the aurora is seen they will get a heavy wind storm." ◆


Educational
Express
to
the
BAY

BY B. M. LITTELJOHN AND R. D. STANIFORTH

The authors are resident masters at Upper Canada College in Toronto who conducted the trip to James Bay; Mr Litteljohn holds an M.A. in history from the University of British Columbia, Mr Staniforth an M.A. in geography from Cambridge University. Photos by B. M. Litteljohn except where credited.

"NORTH". For some, the word has connotations of adventure—even romance. North lies the frontier: the valley of the Nahanni, the lost lakes of the Barren Lands, the outposts of James and Hudson Bays. To many urbanites, cooped up in the cities of the South, going "up North" (even if it be a mere hundred miles) means escape from the restraints and dirt of the city.

But there is more to the North and the near-North; there are also basic lessons in Canadian geography. The first of these makes it clear that the northern hinterland of the southern cities is also—in large degree—the heartland of the Dominion. The pulse of the nation is not found in the cities alone; it beats strongly up on the Shield, and even in the lowlands that cradle James Bay. Here is the land of minerals, pulp-sticks, and the furry rodent that appeared on our coins before the beaver lost out to the hare. And here are found the essential components of that economy which has marked Canada off from its southern neighbour ever since the first wandering Norseman yarded Canadian timber out of the bush.

North is the direction taken by boys of Upper Canada College each year as Easter holidays roll around. Their destination is Moosonee, and their goal is a better appreciation of the Canada which lies outside the cities—the comparatively unpaved and untamed Canada of the miner, pulp cutter, and trapper.

For the thirty-two travellers, the 1967 trail led north from Toronto by way of Cochrane and the Ontario Northland Railway—the lifeline linking Moosonee to the cities of the South. As the branch lines and endless forests rolled by, the boys from the metropolis begin to appreciate the immensity of the hinterland and the isolation of the more northerly settlements. They also had the opportunity of talking with their fellow passengers aboard the Polar Bear Express, some of whom told much of the North and its ways.

One of these, Eddie Trapper, whose occupation is suggested in his name, held their attention for many a mile. Returning from a trappers' contest in North Bay (which he won), he gave them a picture of life in the bush which left any formal classroom lesson far behind. Speaking in picturesque but direct language, Eddie conveyed a sense of wilderness self-reliance as well as detailed information about his way of life and the

Boys from Upper Canada College in the sleeping car aboard the Polar Bear Express.

Eddie Trapper tells the boys about life in the bush and fur trapping.

H. J. P. SCHAFFTER

economics of the fur-trade. Here was teaching at its best, and lessons not to be forgotten.

Another man who helped the miles to pass quickly was Ossie Saari—a Finlander who, like many of his origin, had made his home on the Canadian Shield. An Ontario Northland Railway employee for more than twenty-five years, Ossie told of the obstacles of muskeg and hard precambrian rock which were overcome in the construction of the line during the late twenties and early thirties. These problems, he added, were of a continuing nature and made necessary constant inspection of the line and continual pouring in of stone and gravel fill. Here was an informal lesson on the problems of railway construction in rough country, one of the major themes of Canadian history. Ossie's experience of operating a goose hunting camp for the O.N.R. also provided much ammunition for a discussion of wildlife and the hunting habits of the James Bay area Cree—topics dear to the hearts of most youngsters. So the miles flashed by until, twenty-one hours from Toronto, and having made the gentle descent from the Shield to the Hudson Bay Lowlands, the train pulled into Moosonee station, the end of steel. Here, skidoos and snowmobiles took the place of taxicabs and subways.

The days that followed were crammed with activity, much of which made the boys aware of the growth and possibilities of the small railhead centre, as well as some of its problems. The town, it soon became apparent, owes its special character to its position at the railhead and on the banks of the Moose River, only a short distance from James Bay. A visit to the local airfield, followed by flights in an Austin Airways Otter, helped to bring this point home. The sight of coasting vessels and barges beached for the winter, and piles of material destined for outposts farther north reinforced their realization that this is a distribution point—a jumping-off spot for a wide area.

Some of the more aware travellers sensed the possibilities of the town, thus providing an ideal opportunity to discuss its potential as a deep-water port. The discussion was topical, for the pros and cons of such a development are deserving of continued debate.

Although many Canadians, for years, have welcomed the idea of an ocean port at Moosonee, it remains a pipe

M. BER'18

The Moose River is crossed by snowmobile and at Moose Factory on the island the U.C.C. boys visit the old Anglican church of St Thomas, opened in 1864 after four years' construction, and the 19th century H B C forge, incorrectly dated 1740.

H. J. P. SCHAFFTER

Different methods of northern transportation were tried by the U.C.C. boys and Moose River was the site for trips by dog-team and by motor toboggan, which proved more popular.

dream. The long term advantages are still outweighed by the obvious difficulties, and the seemingly insuperable problems of the icebound Hudson Strait cast a shadow over the whole scheme. Nevertheless, while it would be impossible for international shipping to use the Strait and the port for much more than six weeks each year, lower Hudson Bay and James Bay would remain open to local shipping for about six months.

A well dredged harbour at Moosonee would provide a working "summer" base and a safe, protected winter berth, unaffected by either packed ice or significant changes in water level.

Such a harbour would give tremendous impetus to under-developed Northern Ontario. Cheap water transportation would immediately reduce development costs of the many minerals in the Hudson Bay area.

The Belcher Islands, in the southeastern part of the Bay, are almost solid magnetite ore. They, in themselves, would make a port worthwhile, if, as seems likely, the ore could be competitively moved south to Hamilton. More huge deposits of magnetite ore—perhaps the greatest in the world—lie by the Great Whale River on the mainland east of the islands. Columbium ore is now being mined just south of James Bay. Zinc and copper are known to exist in small quantities nearby, and almost every month prospectors zero in on additional workable minerals such as the recently discovered gypsum and lignite deposits.

Economic progress breeds economic progress. And if Moosonee once afforded a more accessible gateway to the South, there would undoubtedly be some startling developments. If, more doubtfully, the Hudson Strait could be kept open for longer periods, access to the Atlantic and so to Europe could be provided for Canadian goods. Saw mills, ore docks, pulp factories, and grain elevators might well vie for space on a crowded waterfront.

For the present, such development remains a dream, but where raw materials, power, and transport are available, development cannot be delayed indefinitely. The U.C.C. boys found this a viable theory. Perhaps it

M. BERLIS

takes a young mind to see how simple it all really is.

That question "settled", the travellers turned from scouting economic possibilities to other pursuits. Visits to the large R.C.A.F. early-warning base and to the government meteorological station (which also takes radiation fallout samples) opened their eyes to other northern activities. Perhaps a dip in the airmen's swimming pool also helped to drive home the point that Moosonee has come a long way since Hudson's Bay Company men first visited the area almost 300 years ago.

Moose Factory—the oldest established community in Ontario—was the focal point of H B C activity in those early days and, of course, a "must" on the boys' itinerary. A short snowmobile ride across the Moose River brought them to this interesting island community where Cree Indians make up much of the population. Here, the sense of history is strong and was reinforced by visits to the small, but fascinating, Company museum and to the old Anglican Church. Here, too, the schoolboys from Toronto met other schoolboys of very different background. The meeting took place at Norden Hall, a residential school for Cree and Ojibwa boys.

A game of floor hockey broke the ice, figuratively speaking (the outdoor rinks were inoperative because of unseasonably mild weather!), and demonstrated to the Torontonians that Indian boys are tough and agile, indeed. Having learnt something of the athletic ability of their hosts, the vanquished U.C.C. boys learnt more about northern life over lunch. One got the impression that the exchange of ideas and body-checks was a useful preliminary exercise in opening the door to understanding between two segments of our population.

Perhaps just as useful, although far less pleasant, were encounters with other Cree lads back in Moosonee. Here, a couple of snowball fights led to minor scrapping which reflected an understandable Indian resentment at the intrusion of the comparatively well-heeled visitors from the South. More important, the "rumble" helped to underline a continuing Canadian problem: that of helping the Indian to find his feet in contemporary

The ice is broken with a game of indoor hockey (left) between U.C.C. and Indian boys of Norden Hall in Moose Factory and (right) a boy from the southern school gets acquainted with boys at the northern residential school.

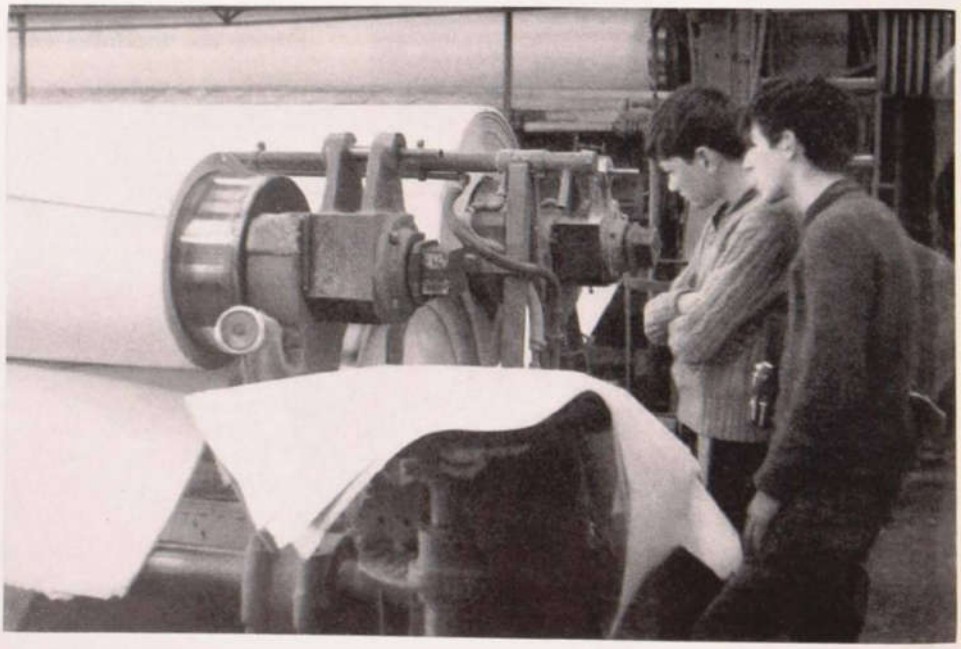
society. Learning is, at times, a painful process, as any student knows.

The boys' introduction to northern modes of transportation had nothing of pain to it. Travelling behind one of the few remaining dog-teams in the area was good fun. The dog-team, however, has pretty well given way to mechanized travel, to the dismay of those who have long viewed the husky as the symbol of the North. Motor-toboggans now hold pride of place; and who wants to travel behind a slow sledge team when he can race a peppy little skidoo across the broad surface of the Moose River? The answer to this question was never in doubt, and skidoo driving was the hit of the Moosonee visit. Every spare moment was filled with trips up and down the river as the boys came to terms with the machine which is rapidly displacing the husky and the snowshoe.

The return trip, undertaken with considerable regret, was broken by visits to a plywood plant, a pulp and paper mill, and the huge new Texas Gulf ore concentrator. There was also a descent 4,000 feet down the Dome gold mine in full miner's kit, which for many boys rated as the high point of the whole tour. Others rated their final meal, northern pike followed by moose meat, as the high point.

Whatever their choice, the boys arrived back in Toronto with a keener appreciation of the nature of their country, its industries, and its people, as well as some insight into the promise of the North. In 1625, Francis Bacon wrote, "Travel, in the younger sort, is a part of education". In 1967, one of the "younger sort" amplified his point: "This trip is worth a month of classes". The truth is difficult to combat. We agreed. ◆

The return trip is broken by a descent into the Dome gold mine, where the boys get expert instruction from Chief Geologist Dr P. Holmes, and a visit to the pulp and paper mill at Iroquois Falls.



Law and Authority in Red River

BY ROY ST GEORGE STUBBS

Winnipeg lawyer who has made a study of early legal activities in the area and written numerous papers and books including the recently published "Four Recorders of Rupert's Land".

IN 1835, when Lord Selkirk's heirs re-sold to the Hudson's Bay Company the land which he had acquired from the Company for his Red River Settlement,* the population of the colony, at the forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, was 3,679 persons; many of whom were settlers who had burnt their bridges and cast their lines permanently in Assiniboia. The machinery for law enforcement which then existed was quite inadequate for the needs of a community of this size.

Judged against the background of their own times, the Governor and Committee, in London, were enlightened businessmen, who made profit in fur their prime motive, but not their sole motive. They did have a genuine concern for the colony's welfare. To meet the needs for a more efficient system of administering law and order, they established the General Quarterly Court of Assiniboia. In 1839, for the more efficient functioning of this Court, they decided that it should be presided over by a Company official with legal training. This official was to be styled the Recorder of Rupert's Land. He was not given the title of judge, as he held his patent from the Company, and not from the Crown.

Sir George Simpson, Governor of Rupert's Land for the Hudson's Bay Company, from 1821 to 1860, a man in whose web there were mingled strands of greatness, as well as strands of a commoner sort, was given the task of selecting the first Recorder. His choice fell upon Adam Thom, a Scot, from Forfarshire, cut to his own individual pattern. Thom had settled in Montreal, where on 23 May 1837, after a brief career in journalism, he was called to the Bar of Lower Canada. By virtue of his appointment as first Recorder of Rupert's Land, Adam Thom must be accorded the distinction of being "the father of the Bench and Bar of Western Canada" as he was described by Archer Martin. Take him all in all, his good qualities with his bad, the bitter strands of his personality with the sweet, he was quite worthy of holding this distinction.

Thom had a considerable part in the preparation of Lord Durham's Report. His influence was reflected in Durham's attitude to French Canada. When Durham recommended that: "It must henceforth be the first and steady purpose of the British government to establish an English population, with English laws and language, in this Province [of Lower Canada], and to trust its government to none but a decidedly English legislature," the words may have been his own, but the sentiment they expressed was Thom's.

Thom's declared attitude to French Canadians was not a good recommendation for a judicial officer in Red River in 1839. As Professor W. L. Morton nicely put it, his very presence was "a standing invitation to trouble in a colony more than half French."

This trouble, which had been slowly brewing over the years, came to a head, when Pierre Guillaume Sayer was brought to trial before the General Quarterly Court, on 17 May 1849, on a charge of trading in furs in the Hudson's Bay Company's territories without a licence. The mixed population of Red River had long been resentful of the Company's fur trading monopoly. On the morning of Sayer's trial, the Métis armed themselves and marched in a determined body to the Court House. Alexander Ross reports that "377 guns were counted, besides here and there groups armed with other missiles of every description." It is not my present purpose to deal with the Sayer trial, which, in itself, is an interesting and significant chapter in the history of Red River. It suffices to say that Sayer was convicted, largely on the evidence of his own son, a boy of twelve years, but that no sentence was passed upon him.

So incensed were the Métis by Thom's part in this trial, that Sir George Simpson advised him not to take his seat on the bench for a year. He was hopeful that in this interval the animosity against his protégé would subside.

While he was proscribed from sitting as Recorder, Thom was summoned to appear in the Quarterly Court as a litigant. This brings me to my present purpose, which is to hold up the mirror of the law to give a brief reflection of life in Red River at the middle of last century.

* The actual date of the grant of reconveyance was 4 May 1836, but Governor Simpson did not wait for the formal documents to be signed. Anticipating events, he summoned the new Council of Assiniboia on 12 February 1835.

Adam Thom

The first Recorder of Rupert's Land, who was appointed in March 1839 to preside over the General Quarterly Court.

What happened in Court during the hearing of the case against Thom will never be definitely known. Reports are too conflicting. One fact is clear: the records of the General Quarterly Court do not give a complete picture.

The brief official record runs as follows:

General Quarterly Court held at the Court house on the twenty-first day of February, One Thousand eight hundred and Fifty.

Present:

Major Caldwell, Governor of Assiniboia, President.
Alexander Ross Esqr Counsellor of d°
I. Peter Pruden, Esqr d° d°
Cuthbert Grant, Esqr d° d°

Hugh Matheson
versus
Adam Thom Esqr

The Plaintiff stated that he had made a verandah for the defendant which he charged £25 and which sum the defendant refused to pay.

The Defendant pled that the Plaintiff had never sent in his Bill for the work he had done but had simply demanded £25 verbally of him, and under those circumstances he had resisted the demand and appealed for the legality of his resistance to the opinion of the Bench.

The President acknowledged the legality of the Defendants appeal, and the plaintiff was accordingly nonsuited.

This disposition of the case certainly does not accord well with the principles of justice. As a lawyer, Thom must have realized this fact. He knew that Matheson had done work for him, and not for charity, but for hire. The account had to be settled, on a *quantum meruit*† basis, if on no other. To plead that he had not been given written notice of the account was a mere quibble and the Court should have told him so and insisted on getting down to the heart of the matter.

A report sent by Major W. B. Caldwell, Governor of Assiniboia, to the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company, under date of 22 March 1850, gives a much more stirring account of the trial than does the official record.‡

According to Caldwell's version, Ross left the bench at the opening of Court. Cuthbert Grant was appointed by the President to act as sheriff in his stead. "M' Grant was requested to call a jury; he did so, placing six of the English & the same number of Canadian-

origin upon it. Mr Thom was asked whether he objected to any of the jurymen—he replied this is not the time to challenge them, as until they are sworn in they are not a jury. He then referred to a decision of the Counsellors at the Council of Assiniboia held upon the 31st May 1849 [this was two weeks after the Sayer trial], that when the Plaintiff & Defendant were of the same country, the jury should be selected [?] accordingly, & stated the reason why it should be so, for with the exception of Mr Marrion the Canadians would not be able to understand him, tho' he made use of the most simple language—"

Thom's attitude offended Cuthbert Grant and he threatened to retire from the bench as Ross had done. The President told him he was at liberty to do so if he pleased. He had second thoughts and continued as a member of the court.

(The Métis never forgave Thom for his attempt to exclude members of their race from the jury. In a petition which they presented to Sir George Simpson in June 1850 they said that Thom had used his position to abuse and insult "in open court the whole nation.")

Another attempt was made to call a jury. A relative of Matheson was among the twelve men who were summoned. "The defendant commented upon it, at the same time remarking he had no objection to the individual in question, nor should he object if there were a dozen of Mr Matheson's cousins, uncles, brothers, or fathers upon it [the jury]; he only objected to having those who would not be able to understand him—"

Matheson explained his claim to the jury. The facts were simple and could not have been in doubt. He had had been requested by Thom to build a verandah on to his house. (Thom was then living in a house which he had purchased from Chief Factor Charles in 1847. After he left the settlement, this house became the residence of the Bishop of Rupert's Land and was known as Bishop's Court.) Matheson explained that, when first approached by Thom, he did not know what a verandah was. He was shown some plans and with great labour he had completed the job and called upon the defendant for payment of £25 which Thom had refused to pay.

In his reply, Thom read from some correspondence which had passed between Matheson and himself: also a letter which Ross had written in the attempt to persuade the parties to settle and not take their dispute to court. Thom had sent copies of these letters to Major Caldwell who had returned them unread. For taking this stern view of his judicial position, Thom "eulogised the conduct of 'His Excellency Major Caldwell'. Mr Grant in an excited manner told the defendant not to preach so much but to state to the jury why he did not pay the man, that we did not want law but justice—Mr Thom replied that he was sorry to hear any gentlemen on that bench express such an opinion. Mr Grant said you have picked the jury. Mr Thom with much vehemence and stamping with his foot said, I spurn the insinuation & the sources from which it proceeds!! Mr Grant then said, take care what you say!"

Continuing his argument after this brush with Grant, Thom referred to the fact that he was the only lawyer in the settlement. "He read two extracts from some law book, upon contracts & [stressed] the necessity of specifying the amount of labor or work performed to render a claim valid. The Plaintiff had offered to take off three pounds, he did not wish him to take off three pounds. He would as soon pay twenty eight or twenty two, if the money had been earned. He confessed that the work had been well executed & he was willing to pay the full value for it, but he would not pay an overcharge, because it was supposed that he would not dare to come into court from the strong public opinion against him. He contended for the principle & referred to the Bench whether Mr Matheson was justified in bringing him into court?"

He might well have been asked, "What are courts for if not to settle disputes?"

While Thom was speaking, Grant left the bench and consulted with Ross. When Thom had finished his presentation, Grant asked Matheson whether he had an account. "Upon this Mr Thom stood up, & turning to Mr Grant asked in a most imperative manner twice repeating the question, Who told you there was an account Sir!"

Thom appealed to the bench that this was not the stage at which to bring forward an account. The president upheld him. Without further ado, he took up his cap and left the courtroom.

Alexander Ross could not contain himself. He shouted to the crowd to go home for there was neither law nor justice in the community. The president called him sharply to order. Grant was later to tell Caldwell that "he had prevented the Canadians & Half-breeds from bringing Mr Thom into Court as they considered he ought not to have left it when he did."

Thus ends Caldwell's version of this strange trial,

† *Quantum meruit* (so much as he has deserved). An interesting legal point arises here. The law in force in the Hudson's Bay Territories was the law of England as it existed on 2 May 1670. At that time in England there was a special writ covering the situation as to *quantum meruit*. This writ was abolished in England during the reign of King William but it would probably have been available in Rupert's Land. In any event a plaintiff, if he fails to prove a special contract, may be awarded a verdict for the value of the work which he has performed.

‡ Hudson's Bay Company Archives A.11/95, by permission of the Governor and Committee.

from which it appears that Thom was a man of more courage than discretion. One wonders how much further he could have gone without being met with physical violence.

A third light is thrown on a trial of Matheson versus Thom by a letter written by Alexander Ross to Chief Factor Donald Ross, on 7 August 1850. This light is darkened somewhat by Ross's obvious bias against Thom. When Thom arrived in Red River in the spring of 1839, Ross was a man of consequence, in private life, and in the public life of the community. Ross resented Thom's presence in the settlement from the first. He saw no necessity for a Recorder with legal qualifications. ". . . in place of the simple honesty which marked our proceedings hitherto," he wrote in his *The Red River Settlement*, bringing such a man into the colony "has a tendency to substitute the quibbles and technicalities of law, which few but lawyers themselves comprehend." Ross had an overdose of the layman's impatience with the formalities of the law. Commonsense, in his opinion, was all that was needed in the administration of law in a pioneer community. This commodity varies from person to person, and he did not stop to ask whose commonsense should be the measure of the laws in Rupert's Land. Alexander Ross's position was fundamentally opposed to Thom's.

As a strict legalist, Thom followed the letter of the law, sometimes at the expense of its spirit. He belonged in the ranks of the "t"crossing and "i" dotting fraternity who sometimes throw away the kernel of the law and carefully hoard the husk.

Ross's letter to Chief Factor Ross should be judged in the light of his antipathy to Thom. "The social and political machinery of the colony," he wrote, "has got out of order; there are troubles with our governor (Major Caldwell) and lawsuits among ourselves. Matheson put a verandah on Judge Thom's house and wanted

to charge the judge £23 sterling. The judge demurred. A lawsuit was instituted, Mr. Thom pleading his own case. After stamping, ramping and lecturing some two hours, insulting the magistrates and turning the jury out of the box, then putting on his hat and walking out of the court sans ceremonie, Thom came in refreshed with a few minutes outside and paid Matheson £25."

A brief reference to the Thom case was made in a letter written by Andrew McDermot on 15 June 1850 to George Marcus Cary, former manager of the H B C experimental farm at the Red River Settlement who had moved to Canada. McDermot was the first of the free traders and at that time the richest man in the West, of whom

his friend Alexander Ross said that he could speak the language of the Indians better than the Indians themselves, that he could run like a deer and endure cold like an Eskimo dog, and that there was no better judge of men and horses in Red River. McDermot adds little to the general picture but his account does serve to confirm Thom's strange and undignified behaviour on his day in court as a litigant, and to suggest that the social and political machinery of the colony was not in as bad shape as Alexander Ross would have it.

"There is no news in this settlement", wrote McDermot, "except that the halfbreeds are determined to drive Mr. Thom out of the settlement this summer if the Governor (Sir George Simpson) does not take him away with him. At one time they resolved in sending the present Governor Caldwell of[f] with him as being of no use in the Settlement, but in his capacity as Major of the pensioners they put him of [f] the list and allow him remain. Mr Ross Grant & Bunn have resigned their situations as magistrates and will not act under him. —Here we are without law or magistrates Judge or Jury and strange to say the settlement was never in such a quiet state—probably if you would try this experiment in Canada turn out all the Governors and Judges you might live in peace.

"Mr. Thom was put of[f] the bench last spring and everything went on well by the Governor and three councillors at each court. At the last court Hugh Matheson brought a case against Mr. Thom for refusing payment for the verando [*sic*] he Matheson built before Mr. Thom's door. The charge was £25. Mr. T. refused to pay. Mr. T. came to Court refused Mr. Ross to sit on the bench—Pruden Grant and the Major were the only persons on the bench. The Jury was called and as often they were refused at length when they were going to be sworn Mr. T got up and laid (?) of[f] such a speech abused the whole court insulted Grant and Ross who was sitting at one side when he finished his defensive (?) he took his hat and walked out of the court without any notice whatever been taken of him. The Jury stood like fools looking at each other. The Governor never attempted to call him back—we had no court since that day."

Left: The house in the case, where Adam Thom lived and to which Matheson built on the verandah, photographed in 1858 after it had become Bishop's Court, the residence of the Bishop of Rupert's Land and (right) a house of the same period, St Andrew's parsonage, with a good example of the controversial verandah.

These, then, are four contemporary accounts of a trial which took place in Red River on 21 February 1850. They vary from each other in essential particulars. Let us hope for the sake of justice, "the great interest of man on earth," that Alexander Ross reported correctly, and that Hugh Matheson did, in fact, receive his pay for building a 'verando' before Adam Thom's door. ◆

King Bird, the peyote leader or chief, with his wife, holding ritual items.

PEYOTE CEREMONY

BY WILLIAM I. C. WUTTUNEE

ONE SUMMER I had the unusual opportunity of participating in the Peyote Ceremony of the Indians. Peyote is a small cactus plant that grows along the Rio Grande and to the south. The dried top or button is the part used in the ceremonies. The Peyote religion goes back to antiquity, to the time prior to the arrival of the Spaniards.

I was visiting at the Red Pheasant Indian Reserve of the Plains Cree in Saskatchewan, in July 1964, when I took part in it. I had been talking to King Bird (George Baptiste), who is the leader of the people who practise the Peyote Ceremony there. I had expressed an interest at least three years earlier. When I had asked him what they did he had replied "It is better for you to come sometime instead of me trying to tell you what we do, because I might not describe it to you properly." He now told me where it was to be held that night. It turned out to be an impressive and touching ceremony.

We arrived at the tipi at approximately sundown, and during the evening various people arrived who would be participating in the ceremony. They brought with them their blankets, cushions, and their ceremonial boxes. The tipi which earlier had been prepared by the assistants for the ceremony was pitched on a hill. A big pile of firewood was piled neatly beside it.

When the time came to enter the tipi we stood in single file before it. The leader then said his prayers in front of it, and then he proceeded to walk around the tipi in a clockwise direction while we followed behind him in a single file. He entered the tipi and we followed and we sat around in a circle.

Earlier the ground had been prepared for the ceremony. A circle about six feet in diameter and about an inch and a half deep had been cut out of the ground. At the head of the circle, dirt was piled up to form a crescent moon, and on top of the moon was marked out a little

Born on the Red Pheasant Reserve near Battleford, Mr Wuttunee is a barrister and solicitor. After some years of government legal work he established his own practice and is a member of the bars of Alberta and Northwest Territories.

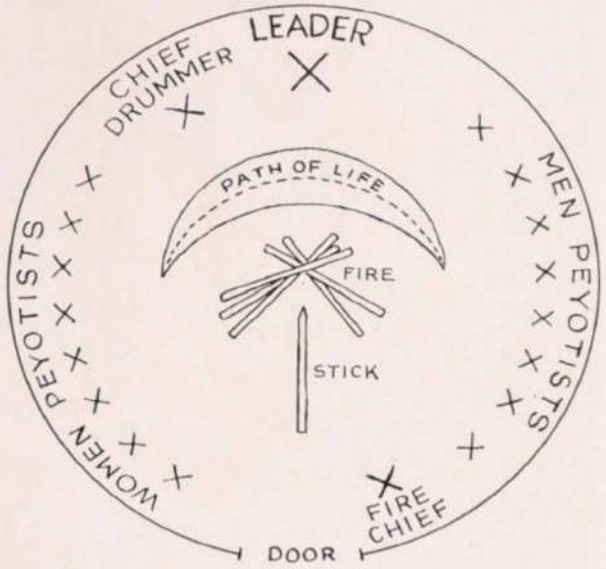
path—the Path of Life. A fire was burning in the centre, which was also built in a special way. About five or six pieces of wood were put at approximately right angles with the vertex pointing to the leader. At the opposite end from the vertex there was a stick which pointed towards the centre of the fire in line with the leader. On the leader's right sat the chief drummer and at the door sat the fire chief who was to attend the fire throughout the night.

The leader started out by blessing the ritual objects to be used during the evening. These included a gourd rattle made of wood with a beaded handle, a water drum which was a cast iron kettle covered with leather, a wooden staff and a sprig of sage, together with a fan made of eagle feathers and a wooden whistle. He then passed tobacco to us, in a clockwise direction. We had to roll our own. The chief fire man then took an ember from the fire and passed it around and we each lit our cigarette from it. While we were smoking we were to meditate, then we were to give reasons why we had come to the ceremony. The people gave their reasons. One said, "My son is in the hospital about to receive an operation and I wish to pray for him this night", and another said, "My sister is in the United States and she is sick and she is suffering, and I wish to pray for her." Another said, "I have had pains in my chest and in my back and I wish to be healed."

After we had smoked, and after each one had given their reasons, the leader then began to pray. The chief drummer took the drum and played it in a fast staccato beat while the leader sang four songs. The drum was passed in a clockwise manner together with the rattle, the sage, and the staff, and each man in the group, who wanted to, would take the drum and beat for his partner while his partner sang. The partner would then take the drum and he would beat the drum while the other sang and so on and on it went all night through. The rattle, sage, and staff were used by the singer in the ceremony, the sage and staff being held in one hand, the rattle in the other while he sang.

I could hear the chief leader praying, "Merciful God, have pity on us for we are poor, give to us the things which we desire, and give to each person present here their desires. O Medicine, O God, give to us the things which we ask for, have pity on us and hear us."

The songs which they sang had strange words, words which had no meaning in the Cree language. Perhaps they derived from the Aztecs, or perhaps the Oklahoma



Indians. Occasionally, one could hear a Christian reference such as Jesu Jesu Jesu Jesu.

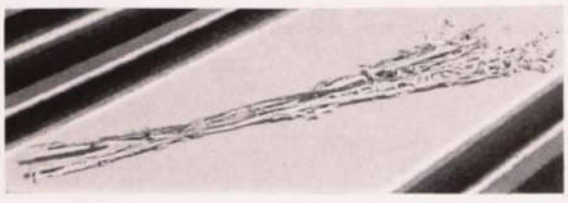
Just before the singing started, the leader passed around a little bag containing the peyote buttons as he would do again at least two or three more times during the night. He told us to take two and each one of us then took two, and we chewed it. Peyote has a very bitter taste. It was in the shape of a circle and about the size of a quarter or a fifty cent piece. When I ate the peyote, it did not react on me to any great extent. It is said that it produces hallucinations and no doubt when enough of it is taken in, it does produce hallucinations.

In my case however, I did not have any hallucinations. It gave me the impression that it sharpened my senses. I could see the bright blue hues of a shirt, I could hear the whisperings, the prayers of the individuals which sounded quite loud although they were said in a very low voice. During the whole night we did not move from our positions except to step out once or twice during the night. Any time we did, we would ask for permission to go out and to come in, and whether to go clockwise or counterclockwise back to our positions.

After midnight the leader announced that he was going to go outside and that he would blow his whistle four times to the four corners of the earth. "When I go outside I shall blow my whistle four times and when I do so you shall sing me four songs, and then I shall come in." He stepped outside, and the singer started to sing accompanied by the drummer and soon I could

The wooden whistle.

The sprig of sage.



The peyote leader King Bird, who this year was elected chief of the Red Pheasant Reserve. Shown at right are ritual articles used in the Peyote Ceremony. The cast iron pot, partially filled with water and covered with a taut skin, is the water drum. In front of the peyote chief's decorated box are two gourd rattles; next the wooden whistle (in some places the whistle is made from an eagle bone); then the staff and the eagle feather fans. In front are a brooch and earrings.

ALL PHOTOS BY U. P. GREEN

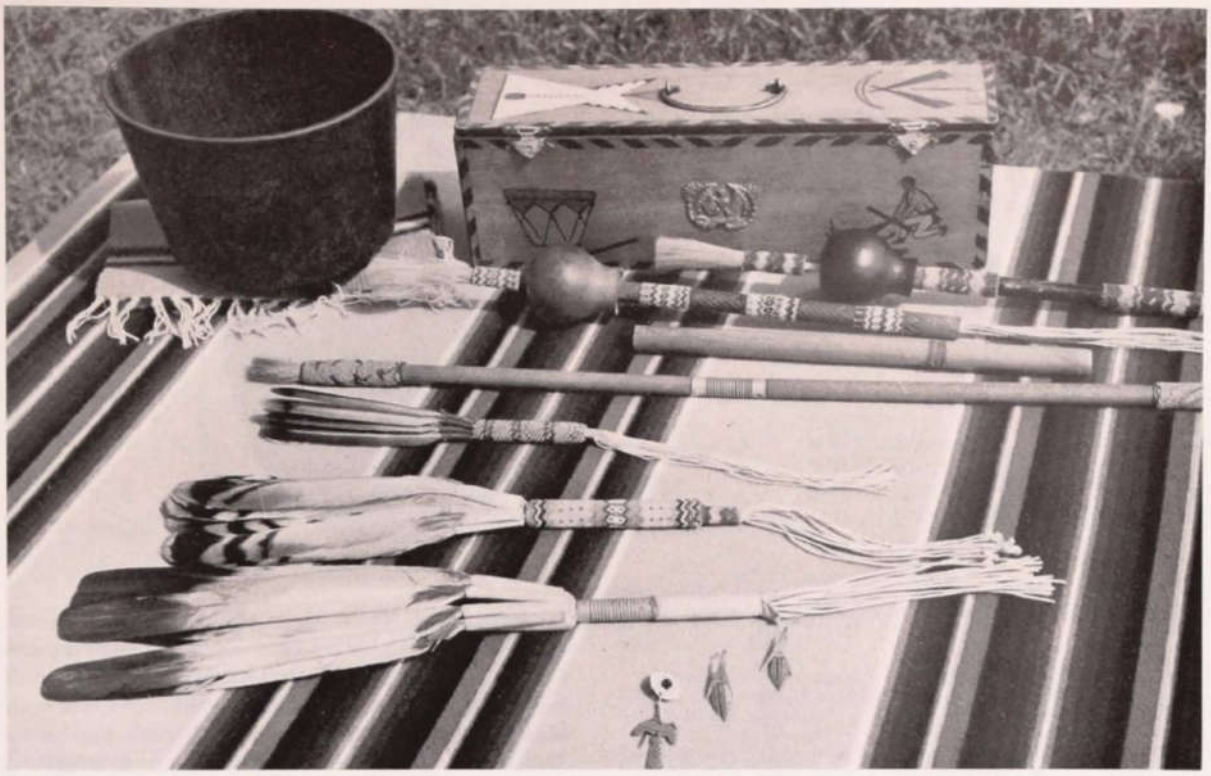
hear the faint whistles of the leader, first to the north, then to the east, to the south, and to the west.

During the night they asked one of the women to pray. "Pray with me," she said as she held a lighted cigarette, "I do not know how to pray and I am not too good at saying my prayers, but I want you to help me with your thoughts to support me in my prayers." She prayed for each one of us in turn. "Let his son get better, let him return in the morning from the hospital; and let my sister get better; do this for me O God, O Medicine. These things I ask, these things I pray for, these things are deepest down in my heart, give me the things which I have asked, O merciful God. Have mercy on us for we are poor."

After she had finished her prayers for each one of us she prayed for herself, and then passed the still burning cigarette that she had smoked over to the leader, and he too continued to pray. He prayed for each one of us again, and for the women, and then he said "Let the white man have understanding of us, and in the troubles which he has created for himself, O God, leave us out of them. Let this religion which has for so long existed continue to exist and to grow. Our Father, merciful God, hear us, have mercy upon us, pity us, give us the things we ask of you and of you, O Medicine. The white man who would take all these things from us, and who has taken our land, who has destroyed our culture, and who also would destroy this religion, let him have understanding, let him have knowledge, and let him see that we pray, that we believe in you, O God, and that we pray to you. Give us this we ask of you, Our Father, O merciful God." On and on he prayed expressing his heartfelt desires. He prayed for the Indians throughout the land, and for everybody. "I pray too for the children, may they get better, and for those who are in hospitals, may they come home. And I pray for the old people that their days on this land may be blessed."

Later on it was time for the water ritual. Water plays a very important part in the Peyote Ceremony. The chief drummer spread out a blanket on the ground in front of the door for the woman who would bring in the water, for this is always a woman's duty and she has been selected for it by the leader. The woman went outside, and got the water. She then came inside and set it down beside her and sat on the cushion which was placed there for her. A cigarette was lit for her, and it was given to her. Before she started to smoke it and to pray, a dipper full of water was poured at both ends of the crescent moon on the ground.

The sun was just beginning to rise, when the water ceremony began. She prayed as follows: "Water is the soul of the earth. Without it nothing can grow, we depend on this water. It is one of the most important things in this world, without it the plants cannot grow, and without it we cannot exist. We depend on water. Assist me with your thoughts in my prayers to our



Father, our merciful God, to grant us those things which we ask, those things which we desire and are so important to us. I pray for the blessed day when my granddaughter shall grow old, and she will see the happy day when her grandchildren shall be grown up, and they too shall become parents. I pray for so-and-so, let his son return from the hospital. I pray too for the Holy Day when I shall grow old and see my granddaughter a grown woman, and I pray for the day and the blessed event when she too may become a mother like I am."

The prayers that were said in the tipi that night were sincere prayers. I have never heard such deep meaningful prayers. The people who participated in them put their whole spirit into the ceremony. As far as the peyote is concerned, no doubt depending on the quantity taken, it may cause hallucinations in some of the participants. But, to them peyote is part of God, to them peyote is the form of communion, peyote does things for them, it is medicine, it is good medicine, it will heal. This is the religion of some Indians, of those who have come in contact with it from the far south.

Indians are fundamentally very religious people who will put their whole heart and soul into their own beliefs. There is no doubt that peyote is basically Indian.

Finally, the sun rose and as it was beginning to climb higher in the sky, the leader said "We shall sing one more round, and then we shall finish". In the meantime two assistants went out and they brought back with them some food which we were to eat. First of all came fruit, this we were informed was the candy which we liked when we were young. Then came creamed corn, which is milk, and as young people we needed milk to live. Then came the meat, and when we grew up we put away childish things, and we took upon us the things which were more adult. Preceded by all was of course the water, each of us took a little glass full and we drank it, while the leader, said, "Drink this water, for it will heal your bodies, and it will heal your spirit." After this little bit of food was eaten* each of the participants then put away the things which they had used, the feathers and the rattles. The leader carefully put his away into his little box, and when he was finished some more prayers were said, and then he said it is time to talk, and each one of us said something good. Most expressed the desire that the religion would continue and that they would be permitted to participate in this religion for as long as they wanted.

When we stepped out into the bright, summer sunlight, the people shook hands, said good morning, talked, and joked. This was to continue until high noon, at which time there was to be a feast to wind up the Peyote Ceremony. This then is the Indian religion which came from the south, which spread into Canada about the 1930s, and which will no doubt continue until it has reached the far north. ◆

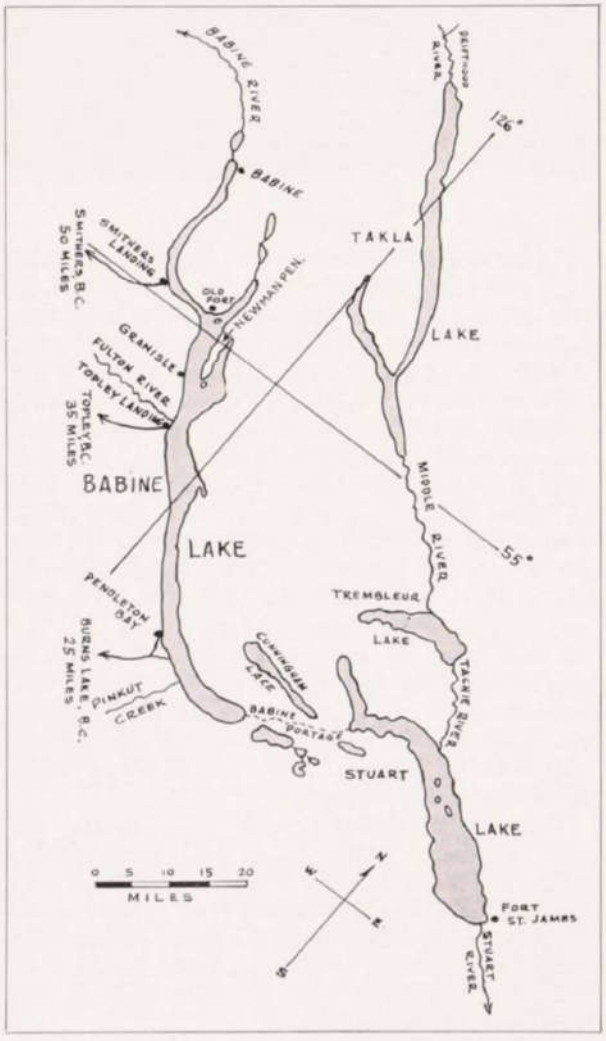
* Traditionally the ceremonial breakfast in the south consisted of four sacred items; first water, then a corn dish, a fruit dish, and a dish of pounded meat.

BABINE LAKE

BY PALMER G. LEWIS

The author is a Seattle businessman whose hobbies are photography and a consuming interest in Canadian history of the northwest. Photographs by Palmer Lewis unless credited.

Daniel W. Harmon.



IF HARMON AND McDOUGALL were to return to Babine Lake today it would appear to them much as it did when they first came upon it 156 years ago in early February 1812. This lake, taking its name from the Babine Indians who knew it as Na-taw-bun-kut or "long lake" is British Columbia's second largest. It is approximately 108 miles long, 6 miles across at its widest point, with a maximum depth of 680 feet, and covers an area of about 190 square miles.

Daniel Williams Harmon and James McDougall were in the employ of the North West Company. Harmon was in charge of the company's Fort St James post on Stuart Lake, under John Stuart, commanding the affairs of the company for New Caledonia. McDougall, who was a clerk at Fort McLeod, happened to be at Fort St James in January of 1812, probably visiting his good friend, Harmon. But let us turn back the calendar six years at this point

Fort St James, then called Stuart's Lake, was established in 1806 by Simon Fraser, a North West Company partner. Furs and salmon supported the farthest west trading posts of the company. Quest for the former brought the Northwesters into New Caledonia (present day British Columbia west of the Rocky Mountains), and salmon enabled them to remain. Furs for wealth and salmon for food. Food more than furs prompted the two hardy Scots to set out on this exploration in midwinter from Fort St James. The salmon season of 1810 had been a failure, and the following year Harmon was faced with famine. That June(1811)two Babine Indians came to Fort St James and told Harmon of a great lake northwest of Stuart Lake from which flowed a river that carried many salmon up from the sea (a tributary of the Skeena).

In January of 1812, the food situation at Stuart Lake was becoming desperate. McDougall's own post was

probably in even more serious circumstances. Harmon decided some relief had to be found and another source of salmon located to supplement the Stuart Lake supply. He knew his friend McDougall had a reputation for successfully dealing with the Indians on a friendly basis. Furthermore, McDougall had a fair knowledge of the Sekani dialect. Harmon recognized that these abilities of McDougall's would make him an ideal assistant with whom to explore the salmon resources, and possibly the trading opportunities also, of this large lake to the northwest described to him by the two Babine Indian visitors he had had the previous June. Although the country was locked in winter's frozen grip, it was a practical time to make the trip. The lakes and swamps were frozen over which would facilitate travel. Harmon organized a party of twelve company servants with two Carrier Indians for interpreters and guides. The expedition, under the leadership of himself and McDougall, set out on the 30th of January. They reached Babine Lake and the first Indian village after seven days journey through the snowbound wilderness. The village inhabitants gave every indication of never having previously seen a white man. They were greatly alarmed and surprised. Harmon wrote in his journal:

> As their village stands on a rise of ground, near to a large lake, they saw us coming when we were at a considerable distance from them; and the men, women, and children came to meet us, all of whom were armed, some with bows and arrows, and others with axes and clubs. They offered no offence; but by many savage gestures, they manifested a determination to defend themselves in case they were attacked . . .

The Babine Indians were a sub-group of the Carriers, an Athaspascan tribe. The name "Babine" came from the French word meaning drooping lip, and was given them by the French or half-breed servants of the North West and Hudson's Bay Companies because of the custom of the women, unlike the Carriers, of adorning themselves with a wooden labret worn in the lower lip.

Nine years later, in 1821, The Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company were amalgamated. After the amalgamation, Chief Factor John Stuart at Fort St James, made preparations to establish a fort in the Babine country. In the fall of 1822, Chief Trader William Brown with thirteen men arrived at Babine lake. After selecting a site and setting up camp, on 31st of

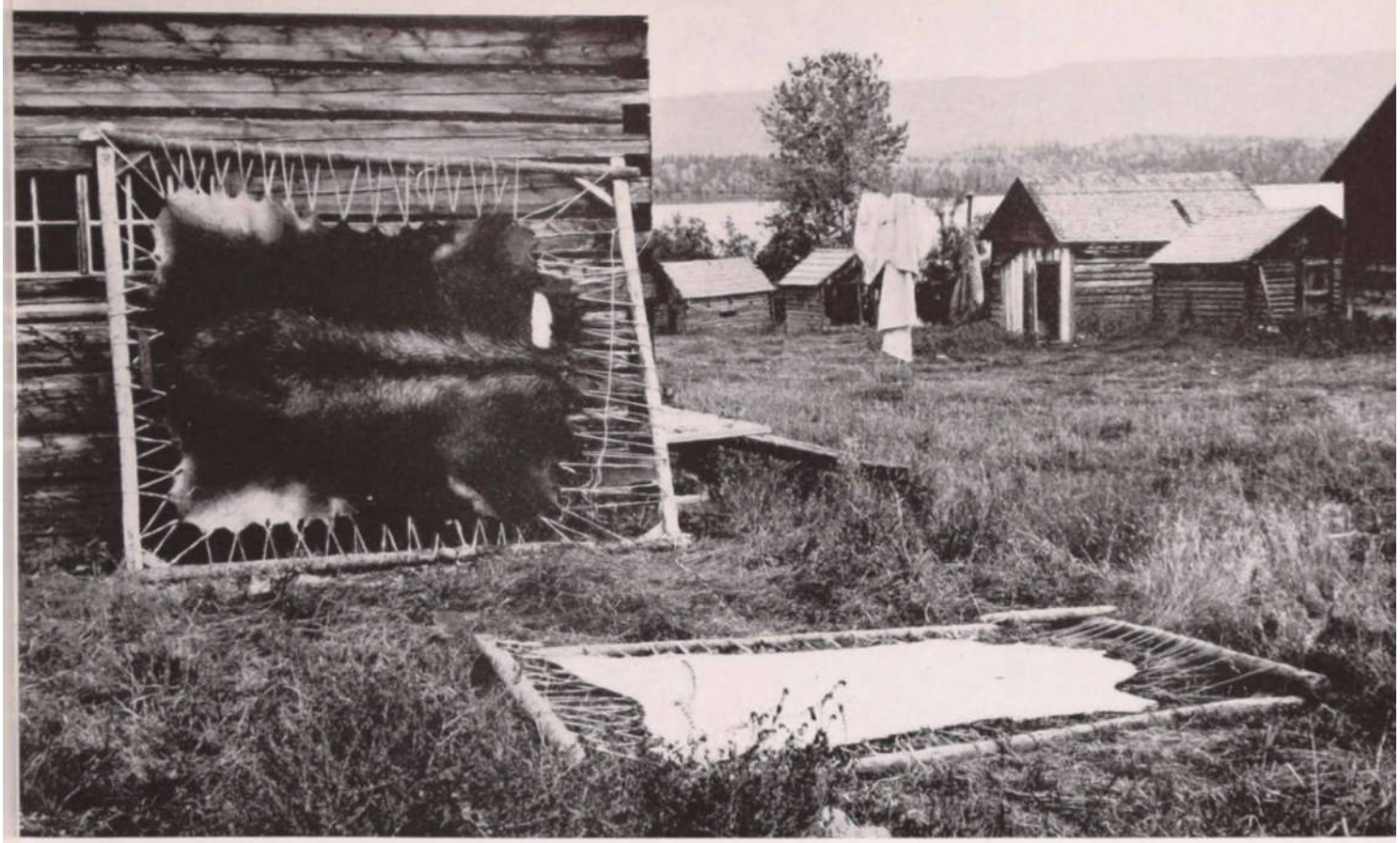
East end of the portage between Stuart and Babine Lakes in 1891; by the '70s the portage had become a wagon trail.

JAMES MCDOUGALL—H B C

The depression in the foreground is believed to be the site of one of the original H B C buildings of Fort Kilmaurs which was established in 1822. Below: one of the children who now live at Old Fort.

October a flag was raised and the post named Fort Kilmaurs, after Chief Trader Brown's native parish of Kilmaurs in Ayrshire, Scotland. To celebrate the occasion a round of liquor was issued and a few volleys fired which so frightened the Indians that they took to the woods. During the following weeks a store 20 by 16 feet was built and wood cut and squared ready for a 40 by 25 foot house and later for a house for the men. The fort was located at latitude 55° 4′ North, near the Y of the lake between the east and west arms, and some 80 miles from its most easterly and southerly point.

The Indians had evidently overcome their alarm by the time of the New Year's celebration, which was postponed until 13th of January because of Brown's absence and because there was nothing but salmon to eat before he left. On the festive occasion the men fired off volleys before daylight and then came in for a specially prepared breakfast of roasted dogs, a beaver, cakes and cheese, with all the rum they wanted. Most of the local Indians visited the fort and were given all they wanted to smoke but were told by Brown that since all his men had to eat was dogs he did not offer them any as he knew they did not eat those animals.



Moose hides curing in preparation for tanning at Old Fort. The 4,000-foot summit of the Takla Lake divide forms the eastern skyline in the background.

George Simpson, governor of the Hudson's Bay Company in North America, stated in his dispatch dated March 1, 1829, at Fort Vancouver (*Simpson's 1828 Journey to the Columbia*), paragraph 14:

> Babine Post, is situated on a large Lake of the same name, discharging itself into the Pacific at Observatory Inlet, we suppose, by Simpson's River [the Nass] is distant from Stewarts Lake in a North Westerly direction about 150 Miles. It was established in the year 1822, and yields about 15 Packs [of furs] value £1300, and is frequented by an other branch of the Carrier Tribe . . .

The governor may be excused, at this early date, for a slight error in his knowledge of the geography of the country west of Babine Lake to the coast. The Babine River, having its source in the outlet of Babine Lake, discharges into the Skeena River, which, in turn, enters the Pacific Ocean at Port Essington. The Nass River (Simpsons River) discharges into Observatory Inlet, a finger of the first deep arm of the Pacific indenting the B. C. coast north of the mouth of the Skeena.

The original site was abandoned and the post re-established as Fort Babine at the northern end of the west arm near the outlet of the lake. This location was thought to be a more strategic point from which to harvest the annual salmon run and regain some of the trade lost to the Tsimshian tribes of the Pacific Coast. Salmon, indeed, supplied much of the food of many early day trappers and traders—and their dogs. As late as 1846 there is a record of 30,000 salmon having been shipped in a single season from Fort Babine to other New Caledonia posts. Dog teams summered here because it was easier to move the dogs to the "fish pasture" than to transport the food to the dogs. There is some doubt as to when the post was moved. In 1836 instructions were given to William McBean, then the postmaster at Fort Kilmaurs, to prepare materials for a new fort nearer the fisheries in the northwest part of the lake, but it was a good many years before the move was made. There is some evidence that it was delayed until 1871 or '72, the time favoured by the historian Rev. A.G. Morice, for in May 1871 Chief Factor Roderick Finlayson wrote to the gold commissioner for Omineca (quotation from a letter in B.C. Provincial Archives):

> Before the land at the north end of Babine Lake is pre-empted, I beg to inform you that I have on the 24th inst. marked off a portion of it, of about one hundred and fifty yards frontage on the river connecting the large with the small Babine Lake, with a view to securing about ten acres

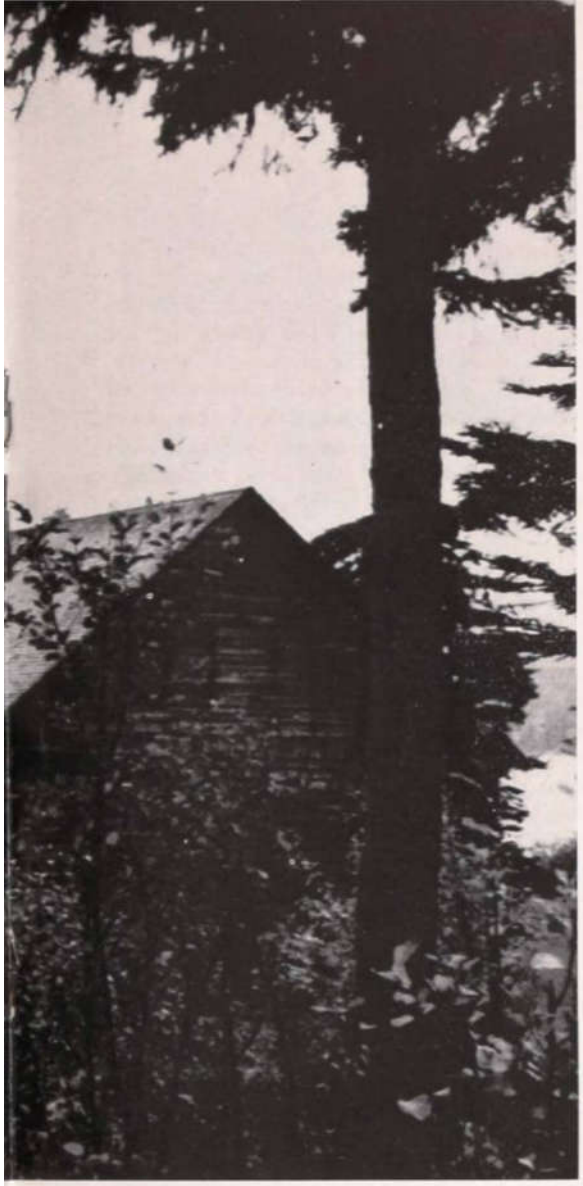
of it for the Hudson's Bay Coy., whereon to build a storehouse for goods as received . . . for the supply of this district, and a corral for pack animals . . . in the meantime I have directed a building to be erected on the spot for the purpose mentioned.

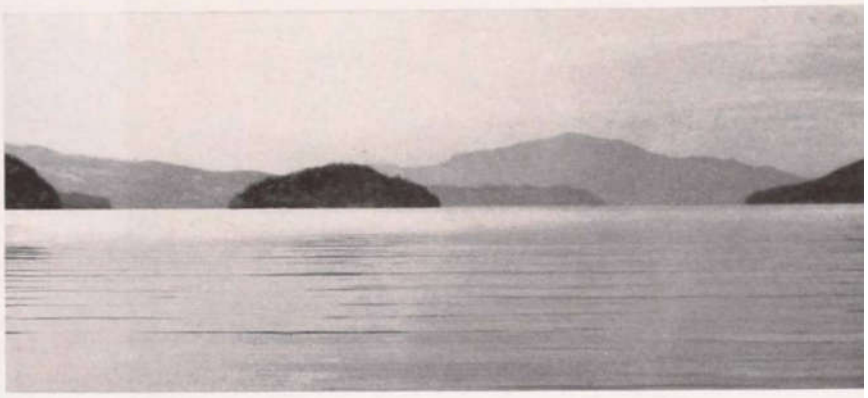
During the years Fort Kilmaurs was in operation, an Indian village grew up around the post. After this post was abandoned, the village remained and gradually took on the name Old Fort. It is known as Old Fort to this day and is shown by that name on maps of the area. The height of land rising to an elevation of 5,147 feet in a northwesterly direction from the village is named Old Fort Mountain. The village is still the home of several families of Babines, probably descendants of the people who greeted Harmon and McDougall. Old Fort village, on the hill above the shore, commands a magnificent 30-mile unobstructed view of the lake to the south.

The church on the hill above Old Fort has a commanding view down Babine Lake. Inside, the central heating plant (bottom right) shows the effect of many a hot fire which kept the interior above freezing in below-zero weather.

The little girl belongs to one of the families of Babine Indians living at Old Fort, where some of the buildings show the ravages of time; those pictured are backed by the beginning of the west arm of the lake

The view of the lake (top right) shows the point of Newman Peninsula on the right and in the background 5,147-foot high Old Fort Mountain.





A modern sawmill in operation near Pendleton Bay.

The snow-crested 6,000 to 8,000 foot peaks of the Babine Range can be seen to the northwest, and the eastern skyline is broken by the ridge forming the 4,000-foot elevation divide between Babine Lake and Takla Lake watersheds.

The Hudson's Bay Company is not the dominant influence of the region it was once, but it is still the "Hub of the Universe" to the Babine Indians who live around the shores of the lake today. A modern Company store serves the village of Babine. When we visited the settlement in early September 1966, the salmon run was at its height. The fish were entering the lake from the river, as they have for countless generations, some gently rolling to the surface, others jumping clear to fall back with a spectacular splash. The Babines were taking the fish as they have for generations also—but with somewhat more modern gear—nets and lines instead of a weir.

The Babine Lake sockeye salmon are the subject of a seven-year research and development program by the Resource Development Service of the Canadian Department of Fisheries. The aim is to add at least one million salmon annually to the Skeena River fishery, for the Babine River system is a leading producer of sockeye. Artificial spawning channels are being constructed on two of the main tributaries to Babine Lake, Fulton River and Pinkut Creek. The first spawning bed at Fulton was in operation in 1966 and 21,000 sockeye successfully spawned there; assessments made during 1967 estimated that 26 million fry resulted, double the number anticipated.

Fine stands of spruce and fir clothe much of the Babine watershed. This valuable timber is being harvested under the management of the British Columbia Forest Service. Logging is selective, and a cut-over area viewed from the lake, can hardly be distinguished from the uncut forest. Several sawmills operate in the vicinity of Pendleton Bay on the southwest shore. Except when the road to Burns Lake is closed by winter snow and ice, a steady parade of big trucks hauls the cut lumber to rail points in the Bulkley Valley.

Extensive copper deposits are being developed by the Granby Mining Company Limited at its Granisle plant on McDonald Island, off the southern tip of the Newman Peninsula. This is an open pit copper producer with a concentrator capable of treating 5,000 tons of ore a day. The concentrate is dried, loaded on trucks and hauled via lake ferry and 35 miles of gravelled road to Topley on B. C. Highway 16. From Topley the concentrate is taken by rail 300 miles to the Port of Prince Rupert and thence by ship to Japan.

The Granisle Mine operation presented some interesting problems to its engineers and subsequently to the

Mending fishnets at Old Fort is a family educational affair.

Part of Babine Lake at the north end of the lake's west arm where the waters flow to the Babine and Skeena Rivers.

Babine Indians. For reasons of convenience and cost, mine employees are housed in the modern village of Granisle on the west shore of Babine across the two-mile wide channel from the mine on the island. A company-owned ferry transports all personnel back and forth across this channel as well as carrying all supplies to the mine and the concentrate from it. To keep the channel open and ice-free in winter, when temperatures may drop to 30° below zero, a "bubbler system" has been installed. It works on the principle that during the winter the water at about the 150-foot depth is 5° to 7° warmer than the water on the surface, i.e. the water at the surface freezes at 32°, while the water in the lower depths of the lake is at approximately 37° to 39°. The bubbler consists of a three-quarter inch steel cable stretched across the two-mile channel, supporting a three-inch perforated steel and plastic pipe. The depth of this pipe is accurately regulated by a carefully engineered system of buoys and anchors. Compressed air at approximately 100 pounds pressure is pumped into the pipe from Granisle and is released through small brass orifices in the pipe approximately 25 feet apart. The bubbles from the compressed air raise the water to the surface of the lake and effectively keep the channel open. The winter of 1966-7 was an exceptionally severe one and gave the system a good test. An open, ice-free channel about 100 feet wide was maintained under the coldest temperatures experienced. It is interesting to note that probably because of the open channel, the ice in the lake went out two weeks earlier than has ever been recorded. While

The Babine store built in the '70s, long since replaced. HBC

Bear Lake Charlie and his wife Salina who live at Babine; he formerly headed the village of Sekanis living at the site of old Fort Connolly on Bear Lake.

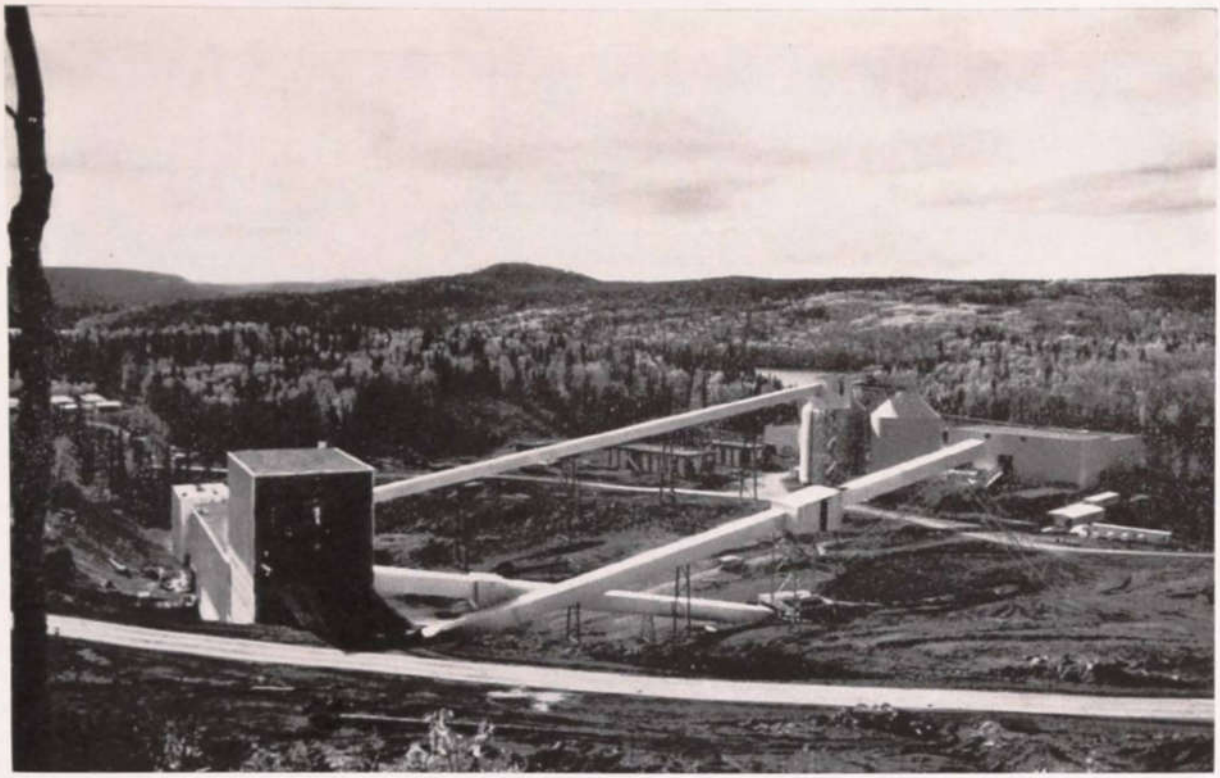
The float at Topley Landing.

the mine engineers ingeniously solved the problem of keeping the channel open between Granisle and the island, they developed a problem for the Indians who formerly used this channel as a winter highway when travelling up and down the lake by dog-team over the ice and snow. The open channel now necessitates a detour round the island.

Other valuable mineral deposits are suspected to occur in the Babine area. Scientific prospecting is being carried on, and further mining development is likely to follow.

One of the Babine country's greatest assets, yet largely undeveloped, is its wilderness recreational facilities. For the boater, there are approximately 380 miles of beautiful shoreline with intriguing bays, inlets and islands. Most delightful of all, one seldom sees another craft, except for an occasional Indian family in their outboard-powered boat, or a tug with a tow of logs. Three good-weather roads provide access to the western shore of Babine Lake from British Columbia Highway 16; Burns Lake to Pendleton Bay, 25 miles; Topley to Topley Landing, 35 miles; and Smithers to Smithers Landing, 50 miles. Some philosopher once said, "There are three things about which an otherwise truthful man will lie: the women he has won, the liquor he has drunk, and the fish he has caught." The fisherman may truthfully tell his best fish story about his catch in Babine, provided that he is not there in September during the salmon run when the trout are filled to their gills with salmon eggs. It is nearly impossible to entice them at that time with any kind of lure. Rainbow trout up to 20 pounds are caught in Babine, and lake trout tipping the scale at over 40 are not uncommon.

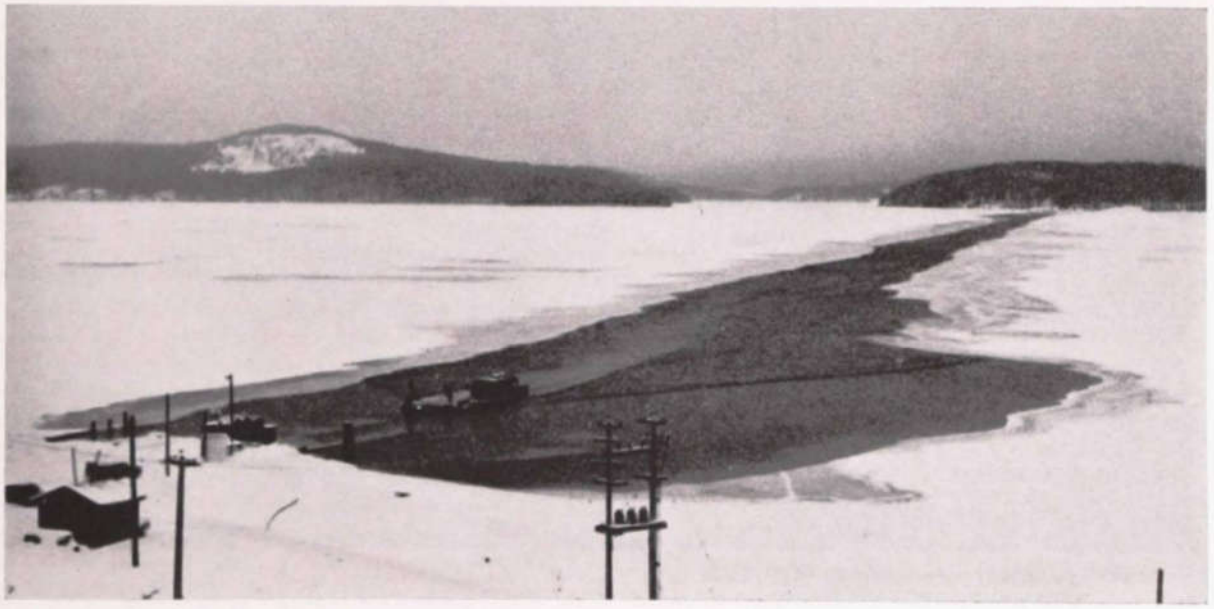
The shoreline offers a variety of inviting camp sites for those who simply want to take a respite from the "city's jar." As for the photographer who enjoys composing landscapes through his lens, there are unlimited opportunities. One September morning we left Old Fort for a trip down the lake to Pendleton Bay. It was a stop and go affair—stop to make pictures, go on for a few miles, stop to make more pictures. A magnificent cumulus cloud formation rolled up from the west and northwest. The sun filtered through it casting cloud shadows on the mountains. A light breeze ruffled the water. The hills rising above the lake were a patchwork of brilliant yellows and dark greens from the fall colours of the birch and aspen mixed with the conifers. It was a scene of bewildering beauty. ◆



The Granisle concentrator and crushing plant on the west shore of the lake where copper ore is processed.

GRANBY MINING COMPANY LTD.

The channel between Granisle and the mine, during the winter of 1966-7, kept open by the bubbler system.



An H B C old-timer in the James Bay District, "Long Willie" MacLeod, sketched by Kathleen Shackleton, wears the long service medal with bars and the Ashley Cooper medal.

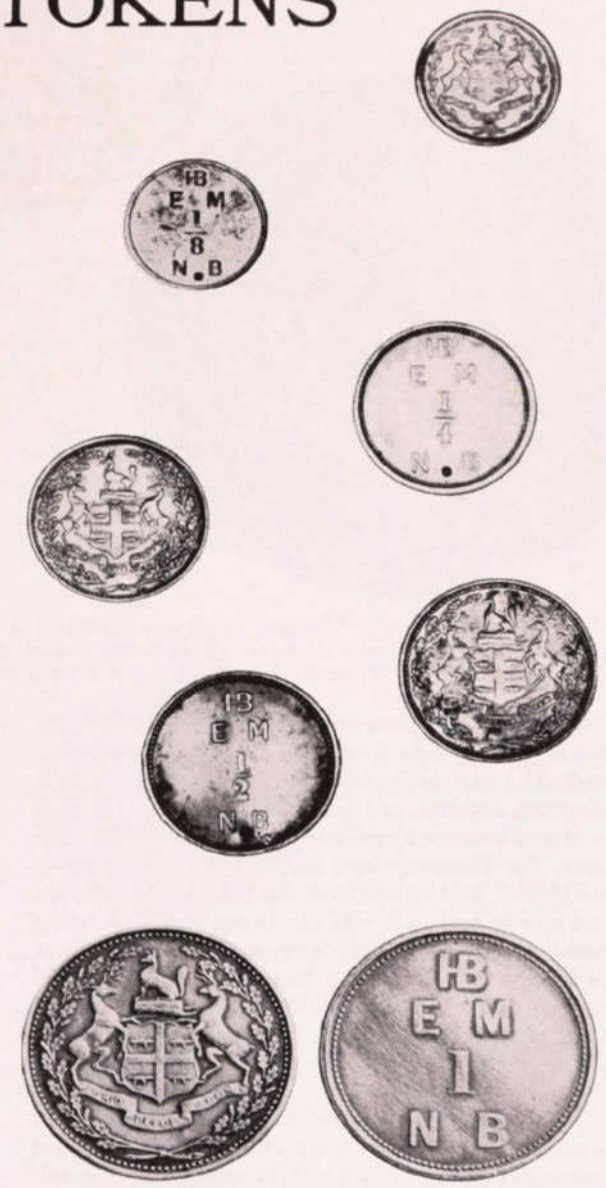
MEDALS AND TOKENS OF THE HBC

BY LARRY GINGRAS
Founder of the Canadian Numismatic Research Society

THE STUDY OF COINS, tokens, medals, paper money, and objects closely resembling them in form or purpose is called numismatics, a study that I became tremendously interested in a number of years ago while working at a job where I was dependent upon gratuities for the better part of my income. At the end of each shift I would sort through the change I had received during the day, looking for coins missing from my collection and trying to find better specimens of those I already had.

As time went on I began to add medals and merchants' tokens to my collection because I found there was a story to be told about each and every one of them. Behind a token there might be the story of one of our early pioneers and the contributions he made to the community in which he lived, or a medal might tell us of the heroic deeds of its recipient or commemorate an important event in our history. Although I have managed to acquire a wide assortment of tokens as issued by various merchants from all parts of Canada, some currently in use while others date back to well over a hundred years, the pieces that have always interested me most and provided me with the greatest enjoyment are those issued by the Hudson's Bay Company.

Over the years I have searched for and have built up a very substantial collection of the tokens, medals, and paper money of the Hudson's Bay Company and have compiled numerous notes dealing with the history of the numismatic pieces issued by those fabulous Adventurers of England. Up-to-date records are kept which provide information such as the past and present owners of known specimens; details of the scarcer pieces that have changed hands during the past seventy-five years or more, either privately or at auction; the condition of each specimen; the serial number and signatures on paper money, and other data, some of which would be of little interest to the average person but are of great importance to the numismatist. In addition there are photographs of all the different types known, the photographs taken by a special process which is aimed at bringing out minute details in the inscription and engraving of each piece rather than its beauty.



Nineteenth century brass tokens, probably the best known Company coins, in values of one, one-half, one quarter, and one-eighth Made Beaver. E M stands for East Main, the district where the tokens were to be used; N B was a die-cutter's mistaken interpretation of M and B joined, for Made Beaver. The one Made Beaver token is slightly enlarged, the others actual size.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CAMPBELL & CHIPMAN, LARRY GINGRAS, AND BRIGDENS.

The George III medal which was presented to Indian chiefs. Above is the medal struck before 1800; it bears the name of the designer, Conrad H. Kuchler, a Flemish artist who worked at the Soho Mint, Birmingham. Below are the reverse and obverse of a medal struck after 1800.

Apart from the information obtained as a result of my own research, I have been fortunate in having this augmented by information furnished by other numismatists, museums, archives, and individuals who may have one or more Hudson's Bay Company pieces in their collections. The Company itself has been very co-operative and helpful. And why go to all this trouble? Probably the best way to explain it would be to say that I am rather proud of my country and always eager to learn more of its history and therefore it was natural that I should develop such a great interest in the tokens, medals, and paper money of the Hudson's Bay Company because the history of the Company is to a great extent the history of Canada.

The Company has issued medals to commemorate important events in its history and to honour or reward certain people from as early as 1791 when the first medals were struck for presentation to Indian Chiefs who were loyal to the Company or who had entered into agreements with the Company. These medals show the likeness of George III on one side and the Company's coat of arms on the other. They were struck in silver and in bronze and are known to exist with two different inscriptions; the early issues referring to George III as being king of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, whereas the later issues (struck after the union with Ireland in 1800 and his renunciation of the throne of France in 1802) refer to George III as being king of Great Britain only.

Since that time the Company has had bronze medals struck to commemorate its 250th anniversary in 1920; silver and bronze medals to commemorate the centenary of Governor George Simpson's visit in 1828 to Fort St. James; and bronze medals to commemorate the 1934 visit of Governor Patrick Ashley Cooper to the posts of the Company in Labrador, Hudson Strait, and Hudson Bay. They have also had 14-carat gold medals struck to honour pioneers of Vancouver, British Columbia, and gold and bronze medals struck to reward those who participated in the rescue of the crew of the M.S. *Lady Kindersley* from the western arctic icefields in 1924. Last, but certainly not least, are the long service medals struck in gold and in silver for presentation to Canadian staff members from 1920 to 1949 and to London staff members from 1920 up to the present time. Taking into consideration the different inscriptions and designs there would be more than a dozen different long service medals.

In 1937 a manufacturing jewellery firm in Winnipeg was commissioned by the Company to prepare designs for a proposed medal to commemorate the historic meeting in Bellot Strait that year between the schooner *Aklavik* from the Western Arctic and the R.M.S. *Nascopie* from the Eastern Arctic. The design was prepared

and presented to the Company but no medals were struck. Possibly a medal may be struck to commemorate the Company's 300th anniversary in 1970.

To get a better understanding as to why the Company and other merchants issued tokens we should look back to the early days of Canada and consider the conditions prevailing at that time. During the two hundred and fifty years following the arrival of the first settlers in Canada there was no official coinage in the land. At the beginning business was often carried on through barter, and what little money there was in use consisted of a conglomeration of coins from many foreign countries. As towns grew and business increased the need for a convenient medium of exchange became more and more acute and to alleviate this situation merchants began to use tokens. Some of the tokens were made locally while others were imported from the United States or from Great Britain and it was not uncommon for these pieces to bear little or no reference to any particular merchant; in fact, just about anything resembling a coin was often accepted in trade.

During the early period the Hudson's Bay Company was in need of some form of money with which to do business with the Indians, but in this trade it was not necessary nor was it desirable to have a form which could be carried on one's person. What was needed was something easy to comprehend by the Indians—such as the wampum (shell beads) that had been a medium of exchange—a form of counter. To fill this need the Company used disks made from ivory, shell or bone; porcupine quills; wooden sticks, and many other items which were usually valued at "One Made Beaver" or fraction thereof. A Made Beaver is a prime winter beaver skin taken in good condition. The beaver was adopted in the 17th century as a unit of value in the fur trade to which all furs and trade good were equated for many years. As the Indian brought his furs to the Company post a number of these counters, the equivalent of the value of his furs, was placed before him. The counters were used to purchase goods, and early accounts of these dealings tell us it was a rare occasion when an Indian left the post before redeeming all his counters. There were occasions

Left and far left: Reverse and obverse of a gold 250th anniversary medal introduced in 1920 for distribution to employees with 30 years or more service. A silver medal was given for 15 years service. In 1935 the commemorative silver medal was replaced for long service by the medal below.

The Fort St James medal of 1928 commemorating the centenary of the visit of Governor George Simpson.

Company auxiliary schooner was crushed by ice in the Western Arctic in 1924;

in the Company's early days when the man in charge of a post would remove the copper or brass hoops from bales or kegs, cut them into small pieces, stamp them with the Company's initials and use them in trade. Many coins, both foreign and domestic, have been counter-stamped in this manner and used. There was a twofold reason for stamping these coins. In the first place it enabled the post manager to be certain he was redeeming only those coins which he had issued, and in the second place it instilled confidence in the Indians because they had learnt throughout the years to place such great trust in the Company and its servants that almost anything bearing the initials H B C was acceptable to them.

After the establishment of the Red River Settlement by Lord Selkirk in 1812, it became apparent that some form of currency was needed for use among the colonists. The Company issued at various times promissory notes in denominations of one shilling, five shillings, one pound, five pounds, and ten pounds. The one pound and five shilling notes were first issued in 1820, the one shilling notes the following year, but differences of opinion between the London office and Governor George Simpson as to the wisdom of using promissory notes held up their being placed in actual circulation until 1823. All the notes were discontinued in 1870 when the Company relinquished its territories to the Dominion of Canada.

A few of these crude copper pieces, probably cut from keg hoops, have been found in British Columbia. The meaning of the numeral (possibly 1 Made Beaver?) and letters above the Company initials is not known.

Below: Tally stick or "oak stick", slightly reduced in size, branded with the numeral 1.

To the serious numismatist it would not be sufficient merely to know the notes were issued in five different denominations. He would want to know all the different dates of issue for each denomination, and the signature appearing on them; to assemble what would be considered as a complete set would require more than thirty-five notes.

Although decimal currency became the official coinage of the Province of Canada in 1858 (which did not apply in the West), we find that many merchants continued to use tokens. There had been, however, a gradual transformation in the tokens both as to appearance and to circulation. Whereas in the early days almost any token would be acceptable over a wide area, the tokens now being used were invariably inscribed with the name of the issuing merchant and were redeemable only at his place of business. Merchants found it essential to continue using tokens because there was not always a sufficient amount of coinage available to meet their needs. The advertising value, of course, was not overlooked either.

The first tokens of this type known to have been issued by the Hudson's Bay Company were round brass tokens in denominations of 1, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, and $\frac{1}{8}$ Made Beavers made for use in the East Main District. The actual year in which these tokens were introduced has not as yet been fully established. Various writers of the past have mentioned dates from as early as 1854 up to 1870 but when we consider what appears to be the most reliable information available at this time we find that it favours a date somewhere between the years 1860 and 1870.

There have been many other issues of paper money and tokens placed in use at various Company posts throughout Canada. Paper money and tokens ranging in value from twenty-five cents to five dollars are known to have been used at various times in British Columbia from as early as the 1870s to as late as 1927. Tokens used at some posts in the Prairie Provinces about the time of the First World War were usually in denominations of

these medals were struck in London and presented to those who participated in the rescue.

When Governor Patrick Ashley Cooper visited Hudson Bay in 1934 he distributed this medal which was struck in Canada.

from five cents to one dollar, while those used for the St Lawrence and the Labrador Districts at about the same time were in the Made Beaver denominations.

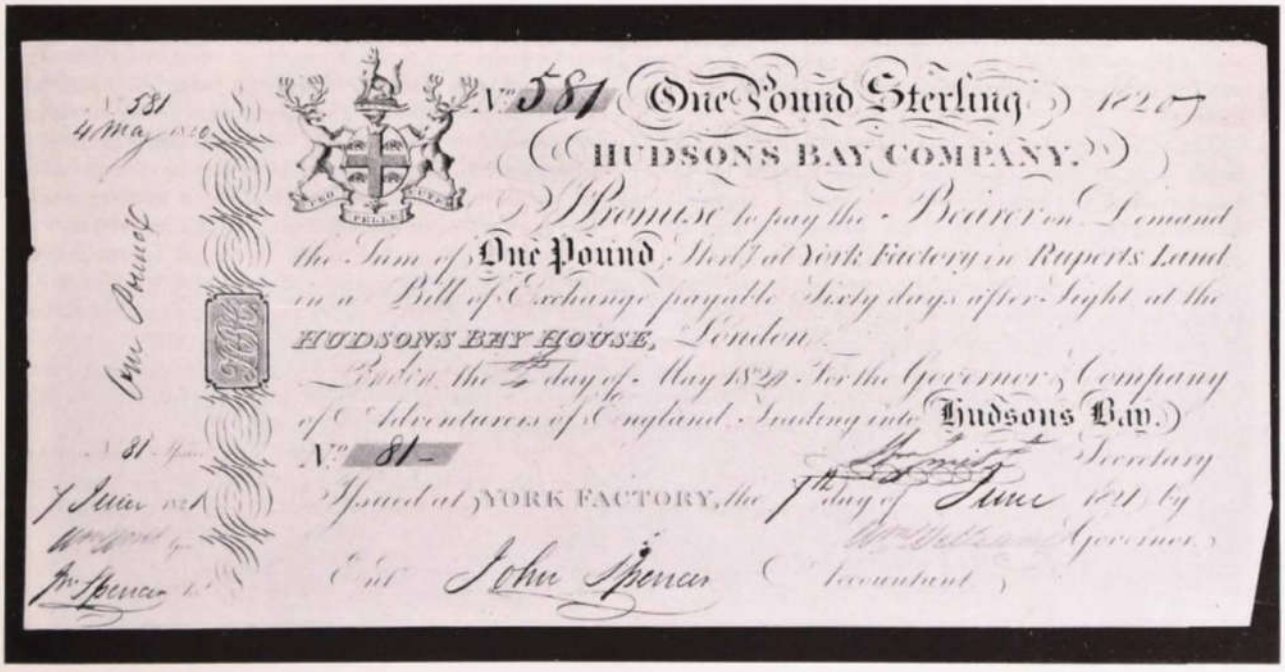
The last tokens issued by the Company were those used for the Eastern Arctic trade commencing in 1946. They were round aluminum pieces in denominations of 5, 10, 25, 50, and 100, and a square aluminum piece representing one Arctic White Fox. The purpose of issuing these tokens was to familiarize the Eskimos with our decimal system of coinage.

It would seem that the use of tokens and paper money may have got a little out of hand in some districts for we find that in September of 1927 Governor Sale sent out a directive prohibiting the use of Company tokens at all posts where they took the place of cash.

Sometimes I am asked just how many different types or varieties of Hudson's Bay Company medals, tokens, and paper money have been issued but this is a question that cannot be answered. I do not know, the Company does not know, nobody knows. The reason we do not have the answer to this question is that while some of the issues were authorized either by the London Office or by the Canadian Office, there were many others issued by authority of the man in charge of a particular post or by a district manager and therefore the Company would have no record of them.

To give some examples: The Company has knowledge of the tokens issued for the East Main District. They would also know of the tokens issued for use in the St Lawrence and the Labrador Districts (including Hudson Strait) when that part of the country was opened up by Ralph Parsons before the First World War. On the other hand they have no record of the tokens issued for Yorkton, Saskatchewan, at about the same time because these

A one-pound promissory note issued in 1820, signed by London secretary, Wm Smith, and countersigned at York Factory in 1821 by Governor William Williams and Chief Trader John Spencer. Such notes were not put into circulation until 1823.



Cast bronze tokens used in northwestern British Columbia about 1900. Some are counterstamped with S or N. Does this indicate the district where they were used?

Yorkton tokens, issued in Saskatchewan in the first decades of the twentieth century.

Examples of the cardboard money in use at two northern British Columbia posts between 1913 and 1927, about 2½" wide. The significance of the initials or symbol that appears on two of the notes is not known.

were authorized by the local manager who used them to pay for produce sold to the Company by farmers in the district.

The Company has very good records of their medal issues because most of them were authorized by the London office, but still they have no record of the medals authorized by the manager of the Vancouver store for presentation to Vancouver pioneers between 1922 and 1928. Company records of the promissory notes issued for use in the Red River Settlement are extremely good and formed the basis for an excellent article written for the July 1937 issue of the *Canadian Banker* by a former editor of *The Beaver*, Douglas MacKay, but of the cardboard money used in northern British Columbia posts about forty years ago they know very little.

The fact that complete records do not exist for every single token, medal or piece of paper money can certainly not be taken as a reflection on the Company's efficiency. When a man is placed in charge of a particular operation he is trusted to use his good judgement to do whatever he feels is necessary for the welfare of the organization such as restricting credit, or even issuing tokens when the necessity arises. Details of all such matters would not be expected in regular reports to headquarters.

To date I have been able to record approximately twenty-six different medals; eighty-six different tokens; and forty-six different paper monies for a total of almost one hundred and sixty different numismatic items issued by the Company, and I feel quite certain that many others (especially in the token category) will come to light as research continues.

For a numismatic study one must know much more than that a medal or token was struck for such and such a purpose. It is important to have answers to questions

such as: how many pieces were struck; how many different types or varieties are there; in what metals were they struck; why were they issued; how were they used; when were they used, and so on. Little discrepancies are also important. For example, if there are two tokens of the same denomination and from the same issue, one of which has the inscription in large letters and the other in small letters, it is of interest because this tells us they were struck from two different dies. Since Company records cannot supply the answers to all these questions it is necessary to gather much of the information from other sources. All information, regardless of how unimportant it may appear to be, is carefully filed because I have found on many occasions that it was only by fitting the little bits and pieces together that I have been able to come up with the correct answer. As sufficient information is accumulated on a particular item this is put in the form of an article and made available to the public, usually through numismatic publications, the ultimate aim being to compile a book. Such writings will not become best-sellers. They invariably end up as financial losses due to the expenses incurred in the gathering of information. But the search for this information, and the thrill in finding the missing links, the satisfaction gained in knowing that an interesting part of our history has been preserved and a contribution made to Canadian numismatics are well worth all the trouble. ◆

The Pioneer Medal issued by authority of the manager of the Vancouver store for presentation to outstanding pioneers of Vancouver between 1922 and 1928.

Aluminum Made Beaver tokens of the St Lawrence Labrador District. This district was the result of amalgamation in 1922 of the Labrador and St Lawrence Districts

Aluminum decimal tokens issued first in 1946 for the Eastern Arctic trade which served to familiarize the Eskimos with standard coinage; these were the last tokens to be put out by the Company.

BY EDWIN W. MILLS

NORTHWEST PASSAGE MAIL

THE CANADIAN POSTAL AUTHORITIES in 1935 sent an official aboard the S.S. *Nascopie* to open a number of post offices in the Eastern Arctic, the one at Craig Harbour on Ellesmere Island then being the most northerly postal point in the British Commonwealth.

Two years later more postal history was made. The first official Northwest Passage Mail is unique and will always intrigue the specialist in arctic philately. It came about in this way.

Of all the problems connected with arctic research, the navigation of the passage to the north of the American Continent has been one of the most interesting to humanity. More lives and treasure have been sacrificed in its solution than in that of almost any other problem.

The passage from east to west and vice versa may have been made in various ways on several occasions through historic times. McClure (1850-54) from the west, for instance, abandoned H.M.S. *Investigator*, frozen in at Banks Island, in June of 1853. While there he sledged to Winter Harbour in Melville Island during April of 1852 leaving the note (found by one of Captain Kellet's officers from the east) but for which he and all his men must have perished and which, incidentally, became the first mail matter of any description to make contact across the Northwest Passage.

Roald Amundsen was the first captain to take a ship clear through the Passage. He sailed from Norway on 6 June 1903, to arrive at Gjoa Haven, King William Island, on 8 September the same year, where he spent two winters. He wintered again farther west and arrived at Nome, Alaska, during the summer of 1906. The Passage was not again completed by boat until 1937, the date of my Northwest Passage covers.

On the Eastern Arctic Expedition of 1937, we carried with us Chief Trader William Gibson, FRGS, who was to go with the *Nascopie* to Fort Ross at Bellot Strait. There we would meet the schooner *Aklavik* from King William Island and Gibson would transship back to the Western Arctic in the schooner on an inspection trip. It was 'Paddy' Gibson and I who convinced Emile Gravelle of the postal service, and the Secretary of the Northwest Territories Council of the value of establishing the first Northwest Passage Mail, such covers to be cancelled at Fort Ross via the *Nascopie*, then taken by Gibson via the *Aklavik* to Gjoa Haven, and thence by dog-team or boat to Coppermine in the summer, and by air or boat and train to Winnipeg.

All this was very carefully worked out and agreed upon. Covers were restricted to a packet of fifteen. As I was the originator of the idea and because the others were not greatly interested in philately, I received twelve of the covers, which I addressed to myself. One was addressed to the National Museum at Ottawa, where it can be found in the arctic section, and one each was addressed by Mr Gravelle and by the Secretary of the Northwest Territories Council.

The packet was given to Paddy Gibson when he left the *Nascopie* at Fort Ross in Bellot Strait to complete his last link of the Passage by boat to Gjoa Haven.

The covers all bear the markings shown and were cancelled Eastern Arctic Mail Service Aug 24 1937. R.M.S. *Nascopie*; Coppermine N.W.T. September 18 1938; and on the back of mine, Hamilton Ont. October 5 1938. Such is the story of the 1937 Northwest Passage Mail.

PS. *It is pointed out by Mr L. A. Learmonth that although there was no national post office service available along the arctic coasts of the Northwest Passage before 1938 except for Coppermine dating from 1930, an enormous amount of mail was carried from the west from about 1920 on, for traders, missions, goverr.ment services, police, and general, by H B C ships, river steamers, schooners, dog-teams. And in 1937 the King William Island mail and returns went out through the Passage eastwards via the "Aklavik" and the "Nascopie".* ◆

SEALSKIN THONG

BY FRED BRUEMMER

MANY things have changed in the Arctic. Most Eskimos live in houses rather than tents or igloos. They use canoes instead of kayaks and motor toboggans are replacing dog-teams. But rope has yet to supplant thong for lashings, harpoon lines, whips, tumplines or traces.

Thong is made from bearded seal leather. Although the pelt of the squareflipper, as this great seal (it can weigh up to 800 pounds) is called in the north, fetches a far better price than pelts of the smaller ringed seal, relatively few are offered for sale, because so many are cut up into thong.

When a bearded seal has been shot, it is hauled out onto the nearest ice floe, onto the deck of a Peterhead boat, or to land. There annular cuts are made through skin and blubber, about eight to ten inches apart, each ring is loosened by passing the knife between blubber and meat, and the skin-blubber bands are slipped off the carcass.

Eskimos from Coral Harbour on Southampton Island who have shot a big bearded seal cut the skin and blubber in broad belts which are loosened and slipped off the rear end of the carcass.

At home the blubber is removed and the skin rings boiled to loosen hair and epidermis. After they have cooled, each broad, flaccid belt of skin, looking a bit like a car tire's inner tube with hair on, is cut up into thong half to three-quarter inch in width, in one continuous spiral. Depending upon the diameter of skin rings and their width, each one yields from 12 to 35 yards of thong.

It takes two persons to cut out the thong. One holds the loose end and the belt, while the other pulls an extremely sharp knife through the skin towards himself. It looks deceptively easy. But every time Eskimos have let me try it (with pieces of skin they considered expendable), I've botched the job badly. Either the thong was too wide, or too narrow, or, most humiliating, the knife would slip sideways and cut the thong. It takes a steady hand and a good deal of practice to produce a strip of rawhide of precisely the same width over its entire length.

The strip of leather is then pulled taut with a tackle. The hair and epidermis are cut off with a knife and all remaining traces of blubber are shaved away. The thong is left to dry, then coiled and stored away until needed.

Most of the thong made is probably still used for dog-team traces, for dog harnesses and whips. Pieces of thong are joined by cutting the ends flat and thin, scarfing them and sewing them together with sinew thread. When in a hurry, as during a trip when a trace snaps, the ends are quickly tied together with a cut splice.

Traces made of thong are extremely strong and durable. They remain reasonably flexible even when they have been wet.

Unlike rope which due to its torque can easily kink, thong hardly ever throws a sudden twist or loop. It has another advantage which one only appreciates fully when travelling by dog-team on a bitterly cold day. Dogs

Tooma, right, cuts thong from a boiled belt of squareflipper hide in a continuous spiral, while his brother Maurice Evaloakjuk holds strip and belt taut.

Maurice Evaloakjuk has pulled a length of thong taut with a tackle on the long wooden wharf at Coral Harbour. With a sharp knife he then removes hair, epidermis and bits of blubber from the rawhide line.

Traces of the nine dogs on this fan hitch are made of bearded seal thong. The two teams from Maneetok, a camp near Fury and Hecla Strait, are travelling to Igloolik.

Tangled traces after the team has been running a while look like an arctic version of the Gordian knot, yet are surprisingly easy to unravel, even with mittens on.

A piece of metal with a hole in it, affixed specifically for the purpose near the doorpost, is used by Dominic of Maneetok to soften a stiff leather line.

hitched fan shape, are forever jumping over each other's traces, plaiting them gradually into one thick braid. The mere thought of having to untangle this twisted skein at 40 below zero is enough to make one forswear dog-sledding forever. With rope it would be well-nigh impossible. There would be too many tight loops, twists, kinks, and knots. Yet with thong it is surprisingly easy. Each trace can be extricated from the plait by pushing and pulling it and one does not have to take ones mittens off to do it, a most important point when it is that cold.

For the long, but short-handled whip, many pieces of thong are used. At the handle the whip is thick, made either of plaited thong or, more frequently, of strips of thong sewn together. The thong is cut to an ever finer taper towards the whip's end.

The lashings of the transverse bars on a dog sled, the kamutik, are usually of thong and thong is also used to lash loads to the sled, be it pulled by dogs or a skidoo.

The Eskimo version of a tumpline is now sometimes rope, but it is more usual to see thong used. The line is long and slung across the chest and upper arms, with the load riding fairly low on the back. Sometimes additional loops of thong tumpline are slung across the brow.

Harpoon lines are almost invariably of thong. They must be strong, pliable and they must not kink, and thong ideally fufills all these conditions. When it has become too stiff from frequent immersions, it can quickly be made supple again by working it back and forth through the hole of a large eyebolt or a U bolt. Ideally suited to so many uses in the north, the strong thong of bearded seal leather retains its popularity with the people of the Arctic. ◆

TWO INDIAN STORIES

WHY DOGS HATE CATS

An Ojibwa story collected by Dr Elizabeth Cass, ophthalmologist with the Indian Health Services, who in the course of her work in many remote parts of the country over the years has recorded stories and legends as a hobby and for the National Museum.

MANY YEARS AGO, cats were not held in any esteem at all; they were always being chivied and chased, and never given any food, whilst the dogs drew the sleds and helped in the hunt and therefore got petted and privileged. The cats finally got together and held a meeting, and decided that this state of things could not last. They discussed what they should do at great length, and having hit upon a satisfactory plan they elected a large, fierce tom cat, whose face bore the scars of many battles, to be their president. This cat was a very brave cat, he approached the sled dogs, who were always teasing the cats, and said that the cats wanted to have a meeting with the dogs, and talk about various matters, and would the dogs please elect a president, and come to a meeting in an old disused hut a short distance from the village. The meeting would be held on the following evening. Now all the dogs started to laugh, and thought what fun they would have chasing the cats, and they asked the president cat if there would be many other cats there. "Just myself and my council," he answered airily.

Finally all was arranged and the next evening from all directions dogs of every size and shape and description were seen converging on the hut; they were met inside by a cat, who told them it was polite to hang up their tails on hooks inside the door, which they obligingly did. The hut was full to overflowing, and in the dusk, at the far end of the hall on a small platform, could be seen myriads of gleaming yellow cats' eyes. When all the dogs were seated on the ground, the president cat stood up on the platform looking very dignified and aloof. The dogs whuffed applause, thinking "In a few minutes we'll have some fun," for they had concocted a scheme whereby they would let the president cat speak for a few moments, and then at a prearranged signal, they would leap forward and start chasing and worrying the cats. The president cat said a few restrained words of greeting, but meanwhile outside the hut, immense activity had been going on. Hundreds of cats had been stealthily and quickly piling dry brush wood round the hut, and now as the president cat was talking they lit the brushwood, and the hut began to burn furiously. The president cat yelled, "Fire", and he and the other cats sprang up and disappeared from view whilst the dogs jostled each other trying to get out. Finally all escaped but of course not one of them had rescued his tail and now it was the turn of the cats to laugh and mock at the dogs. How furious the dogs were, and how silly they looked without their tails. Of course they eventually grew again, but the dogs have never forgiven the cats and always chase them when they get a chance and when they meet a strange dog, they still hopefully search to see if by any chance that dog has their original tail. ◆

ORIGIN OF THE CHIPEWYAN

Recorded by Sergeant A. H. L. Mellor, R.N.W.M.P. at Fond du Lac (at the narrows of Lake Athabasca, about 50 miles from extreme eastern end) in 1913. Sergeant Mellor included it in the report to his commanding officer of a patrol from Fort Chipewyan with the somewhat apologetic note "These legends are perhaps rather out of place in a Police patrol report, but I have included them thinking they may prove of some interest". The patrol of 380 miles was made by dog-team in March when the temperatures ranged from 37° to 42° below zero—"cold for this time of year" Sergeant Mellor remarked with commendable restraint.

ON THE NORTH SHORE of Lake Athabasca, there is a large dome-shaped rock, known all over as the beaver lodge; directly across the lake from the beaver lodge is a considerable patch of red rock, which the Indians frequently use to make paint with. The legend says, that in the early days of the earth, the beavers were the ruling race, and that men were their slaves. Finally the slaves grew more intelligent, and revolted against the beaver domination, and one day attacked the king of the beavers, and forced him to fly from the identical beaver lodge on lake Athabasca, which was then his home, and to dive under the water, badly wounded, until he reached the opposite shore, where he died; in dying he lost so much blood, that it stained all the rocks there a permanent red, which remains to this day; moreover, from some of this blood, the present race of Chipewyan Indians were brought into existence. To this day, before killing a beaver, they first apologize to the animal for the necessity of so doing, "which I have no doubt considerably soothes the animal's feelings" comments Sergeant Mellor.◆

WE STAKE OUR CLAIMS

THE INHABITANTS of this North Country have a deep-rooted conviction that they, far more than those pampered people who choose to live down south, possess the secret of eternal youth. There may be something in the theory too, since the cold does keep you on the hop.

I want to tell you a little story that may or may not illustrate this hypothesis that Northerners stay young. It's about how my husband Pete and I went out staking claims this past January. Not that we're all that old, of course. He's seventy-one, though most people don't believe it; and I'm ten years younger. But then, some people give up and become inmates of homes for the aged at seventy-one; and at sixty-one lots of women won't walk a quarter of a mile.

Pete is a prospector. I think we are all pretty well aware that in a changing world prospectors are undergoing more of a transformation than almost anyone else. Not only that, but they are becoming a vanishing breed that may go the way of the dodo and the heath-hen into oblivion. When I came north from my native Nova Scotia in the 'thirties, and met and married Pete, a prospector was one of those romantic characters straight out of Robert Service, who set out each spring with his pick-axe and his season's grub-stake and his dream of finding a gold-mine. He has all but disappeared now. The relatively few members of his race who are left are practically all in the employ of some big mining company, on a year-around salary and attendant social security benefits. Somehow, it fills me with retrospective gloom every time I see a prospector going around all gussied up in a business suit or sports coat instead of a parka, and driving a late-model car instead of a dog-team. They prospect by means of new-fangled scientific methods too, like geophysics and geo-chemical surveys; and they wouldn't know a sour-dough pancake from a crumpet. They are even being put on pension plans now. (What *would* Sandy McIntyre have thought!)

Not Pete, though. All these benefits came along just too late for him. At seventy-one your chances of getting on, or staying on, the payroll of a mining company as permanent staff are pretty slim too. With a little bit of initiative you can freelance, though, and be hired by consulting firms for individual jobs.

BY OLIVE MACKAY PETERSEN, former editor of "The Northland" published by the Bishop of Moosonee.

Canada's Centennial Year was a slack one for the mining exploration industry; and the dawn of 1968 bade fair to bring more of the same. Never one to sit around and vegetate, Pete took it into his head to go out and do some staking on his own, just like in the old days. What can you lose, except time? And if you manage to sell the claims to some mining company, you may turn a tidy profit.

I must explain that in the area around Kirkland Lake and Swastika, where we live, we are passionately a part of "the North". It's all a question of relative distances, of course. Up around Hudson Bay or in the Yukon they probably classify our area as the Banana Belt. Down around Toronto, they even call sections south of North Bay "the North". Here in the Kirkland Lake area we insist on the designation "Northern Ontario", since our summers are short and in winter we still get temperatures that go down to –40°, and even to below –50° at times. It does seem that the climate may be undergoing some alteration, though. Old-timers stoutly affirm that in the early days in the Kirkland Lake, Porcupine, and Noranda mining-camps the mercury often dipped to –60° and even stayed there for days at a time. Just ask our pet lady prospector in Swastika, seventy-five-year-old Miss Mabel Fetterly!

We had already experienced a couple of –47° days this past January when Pete announced his plans to take off on a staking trip somewhere up in the area known as Moosonee. He would drive to Cochrane, take the famed Polar Bear Express from there, then make the final lap of the trip on snowshoes into the staking site.

"A young chicken I am not," I said, "but if you go, I go too. No man should go into the bush alone at any time. Especially," I added, "at your age." (Here Pete gave a menacing growl.) "And very especially in January."

"You won't be able to follow me. I'll be on snowshoes for distances of up to six miles."

"I can do it," I replied nonchalantly.

"If I decide to stake a fair-sized group it will take me several days. I'll be sleeping out in a tent."

"I can do it"—not quite so nonchalantly.

Guess who won out. One day early in January we drove to Cochrane, from which point the well-known train ran north three days a week. We climbed aboard, with our sleeping-bags, tent, snowshoes, axe, and a week's supply of groceries (just in case). Destination—a certain whistle-stop which shall be nameless. Staking claims is always a hush-hush business, with a thrilling cloak-and-dagger air about it.

At least, we never did need that tent. When we descended at our whistle-stop—a settlement consisting of a few families, mostly Indian—we found that the station-master cum store-keeper, hereinafter to be referred to as Mr Katzenheimer, was a co-operative chap who seemed to find our company a pleasant change from his accustomed solitude. Pete consulted him about our chances of staying overnight either in the tiny station or the equally small store, on the floor, or course, since beds were lacking. Something seemed to be bothering Mr Katzenheimer. The glances that he shot at me were suspicious. "Goodness," it suddenly dawned on me, "he believes that our trip may be a romantic liaison. I should have brought my marriage-lines." Highly flattered, to say the least, I sat beaming complacently while Pete reassured Mr Katzenheimer about our status and then went on to borrow from him some very old newspapers to spread on the floor under our sleeping-bags.

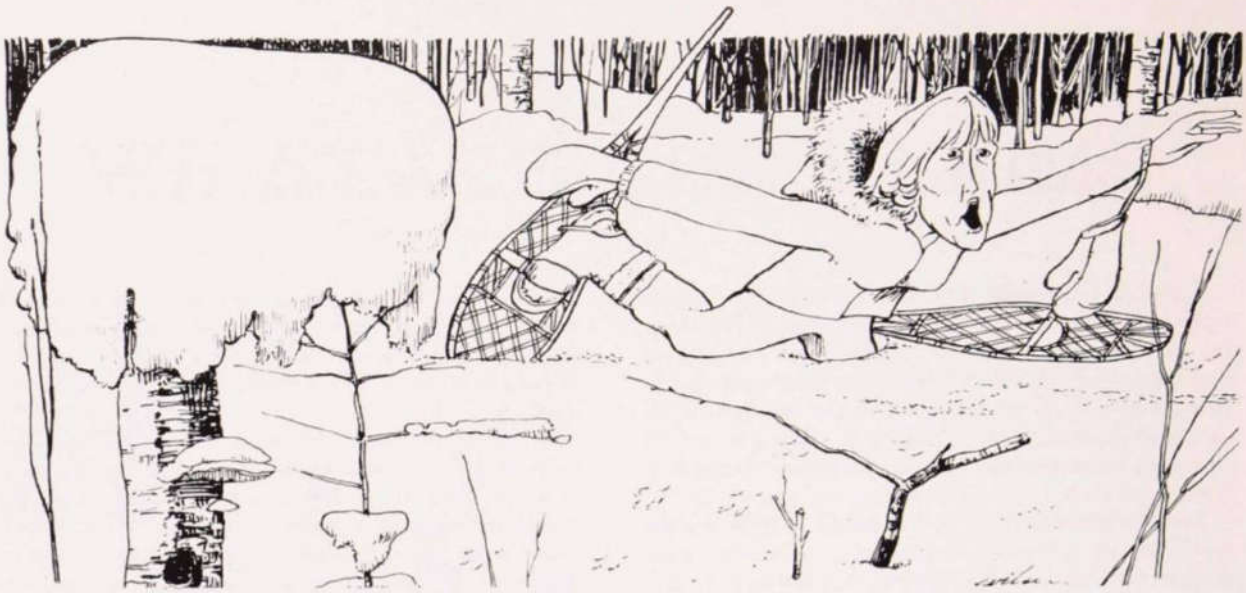
The scene shifts to seven a.m. next morning. The temperature is hovering around –40° outside and does not seem noticeably warmer inside. "Come, come," says Pete briskly, "a new day is dawning. Greet it with enthusiasm. Rise and shine!" He is always like that, though often at his best at six or even five a.m. "*Must* you be so hilarious," I sigh, as I crawl out of the sleeping-bag.

He lights the oil-lamp. "There! Don't you feel better?"

"Great," I say, as bracingly as I can. "I feel just great—not a day over eighty."

"You'll be a new woman once you've got the coffee made," he assures me, peering into the depths of a pioneer-type wood-stove.

We don our parkas, push open the outside door; and suddenly I reel back. I have been poleaxed! It is only the onslaught of the air. At this time of year it is very fresh and there is lots of it; only, for some reason, you don't seem to be able to breathe in its thick whiteness. I remember, with some discouragement, that in the early days in the lumber-camps they didn't like to work the horses in temperatures below –45° because the frost was



apt to "freeze a spot on their lungs". I further recall a remark made to me by an old-time prospector over in Quebec, "this country ain't fit for men or horses. It's only fit for women and dogs." I feel strangely depressed as I fumble with the straps of my snowshoes. Then I cheer myself with the recollection of how, on a momentous date back in 1912, Harry Oakes got together with the four prospecting Tough brothers, and how they tramped through the night, with the temperature falling to –56° to begin staking their claims at dawn in a race with other prospectors. The staking of those claims and the discovery of gold on them resulted in the mighty Lake Shore Mine at Kirkland Lake. Oakes became a multi-millionaire and a baronet. "But," my reflections run on, "I shall not be alive to reap any rewards from this trip. I'll fall in my wobbly tracks; and how can Pete pack out 150 pounds?"

Scrunch, scrunch. How is it, I wonder, that Pete's snowshoes never come off, whereas mine never stay on. There goes one now! Freed from its harness, the foot promptly plunges down as far as the hip (the one I broke last year) in that beastly snow, while the other foot remains firmly aloft on the surface. This gives me a heroic posture that seems to be a cross between a bird-dog making a point and General Blucher pausing, one foot in the stirrup, to look back and wave his men on to victory. Into this gentle reverie—or is it the drowsiness that precedes death by freezing?—there steals the voice of Pete. "I can't think," he remarks, "how it is that you can always get your snowshoe harness in a sailor's knot." He tightens it for me, and in silence I mush on behind his depressingly even tracks.

Scrunch, scrunch. "Here we are," says Pete briskly. He stops by a dear little spruce tree and proceeds to cut it down, then—such are the vagaries of the English language—to cut it up. "A bit chilly, are you?" He lights a fire, and I sit very quietly on a log and survey it. He sets up his first claim-post; he rubs his hands. "How about making us a cup of tea? Here, catch!" A tea-can sails toward me, misses by a foot. "Dear me," remarks Pete, "this *isn't* your day."

The post is driven in, the tea is drunk. The temperature has by now risen to a mild –22°. We turn and, like good King Wenceslas and page, we plod on. Pete has decided to stake only a small group—five claims. By four p.m. four more claim-posts have been driven in, four distances between them traversed. Mission accomplished, we head for home, as represented by our cosy station building.

I wish I could report that I sprinted in on the final lap, kicking up my snowshoes. Instead, I staggered wanly toward the circle of lamp-light. In the faint gleam, I could detect the outline of a figure coming to meet us. Mr Katzenheimer, I presume. Very stiff-legged I tottered into the building.

The kindly host shared his dinner with Pete, while, from the depths of my sleeping-bag, I nibbled on a ham sandwich. As though from some vast distance, I could hear Pete's voice being wafted toward me.

"I'm glad I brought you along, after all. Nothing like this North Country to keep one young. The trip will probably do you a world of good."

"Yes, Dear," I sighed. "I don't feel a day over ninety."

NORTHERN BOOKS

ESKIMO ADMINISTRATION IV: GREENLAND

By Diamond Jenness. Arctic Institute of North America, Montreal, 1967. Technical Paper No. 19. 176 pp., 28 tables, 12 figs., map. Members $3.00 Non-members $4.00.

Reviewed by Douglas Leechman

This paper, the fourth of a series, deals with the administration of Eskimo affairs in Greenland. The first volume, published in July 1962, had to do with Alaska and the United States government's approach to the subject. The second, May 1964, dealt with the Canadian Eskimo and our own efforts to solve the many problems presented. The third paper, May 1965, is concerned with the Labrador which, though a part of Canada, yet exhibits a history and situations proper to that area alone. This volume, published May 1967, has a preface dated September 1965. The thousand odd Eskimos living in the far east of Siberia are not reported on for, as the author explains, "I can neither read the Russian language nor have access to authoritative sources of information concerning their life under Soviet rule".

In this series of studies Jenness has presented us with an excellent example of applied anthropology. He examines the past and present, and surveys the problems confronting those charged with the administration of Eskimo affairs, with the disinterested eye of the scientist, free from the bias which inevitably warps the mind of the trader, the missionary, or the policeman. Unfortunately, realization that a certain problem exists, even a clear understanding of it, is not sufficient to solve it. Many indeed are the difficulties still awaiting a satisfactory solution

This is no arm-chair report. Jenness went to Denmark and Greenland where he was given every possible assistance and co-operation, with access to government files, officials, and private individuals without restriction. Indeed, Denmark has nothing to hide and much to be proud of for, as the author says (p. 90n) ". . . Denmark led the descendants of a primitive race of savages out of the darkness of their arctic night, converted them into prosperous fisherfolk, and trained them to govern their own land with efficiency and to participate in world affairs as respected citizens of the Danish kingdom. Neither Canada nor the United States has achieved comparable success with their Eskimos."

There is no attempt to discuss the history of Greenland in its early days, beyond a brief sketch, and the most interesting archaeological finds there do not belong in this study. From 1721 on, we have a readable and fully documented account of the course of events, with many direct quotations and much interesting detail. Health and education, commerce and government, all are examined in depth. It is perhaps not too much to say that this series of studies is the most important contribution that Jenness has made to science and to practical administration.

As in the preceding papers, there is a good bibliography but, most unfortunately, no index which admittedly reduces its practical usefulness. Perhaps it is not too late to include a comprehensive index to all five papers in the one which is to come as Technical Paper 21 of the Arctic Institute of North America: *Eskimo Administration V: Analysis and Reflections* which is understood to be in press.

Dr Leechman, author and lexicographer, was formerly anthropologist at the National Museum of Canada.

FOUR RECORDERS OF RUPERT'S LAND

By Roy St. George Stubbs. Peguis Publishers, Winnipeg, 1967. 192 pages. $6.50

Reviewed by Hartwell Bowsfield

In his previous works Roy Stubbs set himself the task of saving from oblivion a number of personalities who have remained unnoticed and neglected in general studies on the history of western Canada. In *Lawyers and Laymen of Western Canada* and in *Prairie Portraits* he gave us biographical sketches of such men as Nicholas Flood Davin, Sir Hugh John Macdonald, Fred Dixon, Bob Edwards, A. K. Dysart and E. J. McMurray. The purpose of the present work is to fulfill a similar rescue mission.

In the author's own words, *Four Recorders of Rupert's Land* is an attempt "to rescue four men, who laboured valiantly in the service of the law during the infancy of western Canada, from the twilight of history into which they have been allowed to fade". The four men to whom Stubbs has now turned his considerable talents were the Recorders (or Judges) of Rupert's Land—Adam Thom, Francis Godschall Johnson, Dr John Bunn, and John Black—whose careers cover a period of thirty years (1839-1870) in the history of the Red River Settlement.

To note that Stubbs is a lawyer and that the sub-title of his book is "A Brief Survey of the Hudson's Bay Company Courts of Rupert's Land" will not, it is hoped, deter readers who may conclude that such a work would interest only lawyers. The author has, first of all, a far broader instinct for history than to limit his work to the development of the court system and, secondly, a far more human interest in the personalities than to leave them in their court houses or law libraries. As in all his work Roy Stubbs is quite conscious of the environment in which his subjects lived and worked.

The courts of Assiniboia, he reminds us, "are a mirror in which we may see reflected many aspects of social life in Red River". The *Four Recorders*, therefore, is much more than a series of biographical sketches or a vehicle to present the story of the development of judicial machinery. It is above all a picture of the social climate of the Red River Settlement —"the texture of that free-and-easy, unsophisticated style of life". Neither the story of the courts nor biography dominate the writing. The sketches are not intended to be "in-depth" studies; and, as the author points out, neither Black nor Johson appear to have made any unique contribution to the development of the legal system. All these elements, nevertheless, are carefully blended to provide a background to the basic problem within the Settlement—how could Red River be administered by a commercial company whose main interest and purpose was the fur trade.

Under the Charter of 1670 the Hudson's Bay Company, in addition to its trading privileges, had jurisdiction "to judge all persons belonging to the said Governor and Company or that shall live under them". Not until the 1830s however, was a

court system organized and only in 1839 did a person trained in the law come to reside at Red River. This was Recorder Adam Thom—the personal choice of Governor George Simpson. Considering Thom's anti-French bias, his reactionary temperament, and his uncompromising ways the choice was one of Simpson's great mistakes. Thom, a strict legalist, was out of place in the confined and intimate atmosphere of the Settlement, replacing, Alexander Ross wrote, simple honesty and sound practical sense with the "quibbles and technicalities of law which few but lawyers themselves comprehend". Thom's failure highlights the difficulty faced by the Company in administering the law. The legal victory against Sayer in the issue of free trade in 1849 had to be ignored and the Company never after attempted to enforce its fur monopoly through the courts. The administration of justice in matters of significance to the Company had broken down. Lacking a force to support its civil power the government of the Settlement found no way in which the sanctions of the law could be carried out.

Through the careers of the Recorders Stubbs brings to this story not only his experience in journalism but his training in the law—the latter providing an added and welcome dimension to our understanding of the history of the Red River Settlement. His sketches have been carefully researched and particularly in the case of Dr John Bunn he has brought to public attention details of the doctor's life based on recent research in England. (Not the least interest in the book is the fact that it is the first publication of the recently created Peguis Publishers of Winnipeg, a venture headed by Mary Scorer of that city and one to be loudly applauded.)

Mr Bowsfield, former Archivist of Manitoba is an instructor in the History Department at York University.

JUDGE OF THE FAR NORTH

By Jack Sissons. McClelland & Stewart, Toronto, 1968. 190 pages illus. $6.95

Reviewed by Malvina Bolus

If anyone thinks that retirement may mellow the fighting judge of the North, they have another think coming. A fighter all his life, the Hon. J. H. Sissons is not going to stop now when he has more freedom to air his altercations with "the Ottawa boys" and while there still remains much to be done to establish the rights of the first Canadians. The latter objective has always been dear to his heart and for it he has struggled long, if not always successfully. Some of his court decisions may be open to question from a legal point of view—as evidenced by their reversal on various appeals—but to the reader who has some sympathy with his fellow man and to whom the letter of the law is sometimes suspect, the former judge brings a heart-warming reassurance of man's humanity. A judge must be impartial, and there may have been some justification for the Ottawa remark (mentioned in the book) that the Indians and Eskimos did not need a public defender since they had a judge who was always defending them, but they had great need for sympathy and understanding when their treaty agreements were being disregarded, their hunting rights nullified, their age-old customs—as in marriage, or suicide—measured against statutes and usage of an entirely alien culture.

The first part of the book deals with the Sissons family and Jack Sisson's boyhood, his entry into law and his practice in the Peace River country, his five years as a Member of Parliament and later his appointment to the bench in southern Alberta. The main part of the book is concerned with the eleven years the Hon. Mr Justice Sissons spent as Judge of the Territorial Court of the Northwest Territories. He was 63 when he accepted this new appointment and moved to Yellowknife and though his life had never been dull probably these later years were the most exciting, what with flying circuits all over the Arctic and scraps with the government.

Feelings run strong about this character whose name is now so closely linked with the North and it is unlikely that he finds favour with the civil service bureaucrats—a breed for whom he has small regard—but any reader who knows an Eskimo from a cabinet minister, and cares, will enjoy this uninhibited book. It is the more enjoyable because it is well written; early on, Mr Sissons decided that legal judgements and opinions should be clear, forthright, unambiguous, and he made it a point to apply the principles of sound writing. This is reflected in his book.

He writes about his recurring feuds with Ottawa, describes many of his famous cases, and entertains while providing food for thought. We are strongly in favour of more books like this—but there is, after all, only one Judge Sissons.

THE POLAR PASSION
The Quest for the North Pole

By Farley Mowat. McClelland & Stewart, Toronto, 1967. 302 pages, illus. $12.95

Reviewed by A. Stevenson

The names of many men in history still echo the challenge, the danger and the excitement of the search for the North Pole. The story of a number of these adventurers is told by the well-known Canadian writer, Farley Mowat, in his recent book *The Polar Passion*. In telling the tales he has used extensive passages from old journals and writings—most of them long out of print. The historical action covers a period of nearly a thousand years. It starts with the saga of Thorgisl Orrabeinsfostri, the first Norseman to voyage into the northern reaches of Baffin Bay around A.D. 997. The author points out that although the farthest northern point of Thorgisl's voyage cannot be definitely established, he must however be credited with being the first to make a deep penetration of Baffin Bay, along a route to be followed by others in their attempts to reach the North Pole: "His is also the earliest existing account of European man's battle for survival in truly Arctic regions and as such deserves pride of place in the opening story in this volume."

We then sail or sledge north with men whose names now dot arctic maps: Bylot, Baffin, Kane, Hall, Greely, Nansen and others, including the controversial Peary and Cook who each claimed to be first to "the top of the world". The drama finally ends with the recent attempt to attain the Pole by motorized sleds or skidoos over the ice fields from the northern tip of Ellesmere Island. This Centennial effort of 1967, incidentally, failed.

The on-the-spot actions of the explorers are introduced, edited and analysed by the author, Farley Mowat. In his foreword he points out that "some of the older chroniclers wrote in a style that is hard for the modern reader to comprehend. I have therefore presented such accounts using modern spelling, phraseology and punctuation, wherever there was the possibility that the style or idiom would make easy comradeship between the original author and the modern reader difficult, if not impossible." His comments and explanations within the excerpts from the old arctic journals are written in his renowned style of prose with vigour, directness and occasionally cynicism.

The author, who so often sets himself up as a crusader or a champion

of the underdog, quotes from Dr Frederick Albert Cook—"We spent two days about the North Pole. After the first thrill of victory the glamour wore away. We rested and worked. I could get no sensation of novelty as we pitched our last belongings on the sleds. The intoxication of success had gone. During those last hours I asked myself why this place had so aroused an enthusiasm through the years. Why, for so many centuries, had men sought this elusive spot? What a futile thing, I thought, to die for!" Then follow Mr Mowat's words: "Attempts have been made from time to time to show that Cook failed to reach the top of Mount McKinley and that subsequently his claim that he reached the Pole must also be false. . . . Oddly enough, Frederick Cook never questioned Peary's claim. . . . To the end of his life, Cook never understood the rules of the game in which he found himself a player. Many years after the trip to the Pole, Cook was arrested for having allegedly made false representation about the value of oil lands which he had acquired in the southwest United States. He was convicted, against all the evidence and given a positively savage sentence (fourteen years in Leavenworth—the longest sentence on record for misrepresentation). While he was in jail, agencies of the Government (which had seized his lands) proved them to be even more valuable than Cook had ever claimed by selling them at auction for several millions of dollars. Eventually this miscarriage—or deliberate perversion—of justice was brought to the notice of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who granted Cook a full pardon. The pardon came a little late. It was received on May 16, 1940. On August 5, 1940, Frederick Cook died at the age of seventy-five years."

The editors have indicated that this Canadian book is the first in a series of illustrated prestige publications that will compare with the best from America and Europe. The format is attractive, with 80 pages of contemporary drawings and photographs from the original sources. These, however, are produced in sepia (no doubt to convey old or aged material) and are not as clear and striking as they should be in a luxury volume. Though extensive use has been made of the early writings of the explorers one still must consider this book as a fresh chapter in the history of the north. Farley Mowat has written many books. He is sometimes inaccurate and usually opinionated, but his potent prose makes him highly readable and interesting. His volume *The Polar Passion*, however, is truly magnificent. It is a notable contribution to Canadian literature and in all likelihood will soon become a collector's item.

Alex Stevenson is Administrator of the Arctic in the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

METIS OF THE MACKENZIE DISTRICT

By Richard Slobodin. Canadian Research Centre for Anthropology, Ottawa, 1966. 100 pages, bibliography. $4.00

Reviewed by Douglas Leechman

This is an interesting and important study of the Métis of the northwest corner of the Territories and can not fail to be of use and value to the officials who are called upon to work with them. They are a fascinating group of people, distinct but not distant, well aware of their identity and, for the most part, proud of it. The two groups of Métis, the "Red River" people of the south and the "Northern", down the Mackenzie River, are both given thorough treatment and many aspects of their culture investigated. On reading the extracts from the author's journal, one can readily sense the rich material and surprising facts that were recorded but could not be included in this study.

A somewhat turgid and obfuscated style of writing (apparently contagious) and numerous typographical errors do little to smooth the reader's way. There is a good bibliography but no index.

THE OPENING OF THE CANADIAN WEST

By Douglas Hill. William Heinemann, London and Don Mills, 1967. 291 pages, illus. $8.50 (U.K. 55/-)

Reviewed by Hartwell Bowsfield

Douglas Hill, born in Manitoba, raised and educated in Saskatchewan and Ontario, now resides in Britain where he makes his living as a writer. One wonders, after reading *The Opening of the Canadian West*, whether his heart may still, in part be in western Canada for this approach to the series of epics constituting his story of the west is one of enthusiasm, if not passion. In his intensity he is eager to remind us that Canada is still a young country but that in a short period many remarkable, dramatic and "even sometimes" admirable events have taken place, "the memory of which is well worth keeping alive". The "opening" of which he writes is not, as might be expected, the agricultural settlement of the west during the later 19th century. His story is much more encompassing. It is in fact a history of the Canadian west (including British Columbia) from the days of the first explorers and fur traders to the formation of the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta in 1905. This date was chosen because it was a climax and a conclusion to the opening process. The pioneer period was over and a new one beginning—the period of "developing or utilizing" the west.

No other volume dealing so fully with the area of western Canada has appeared since A. S. Morton's *A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71*. As Hill has carried his story to 1905 the work might well be considered a companion volume. It can, however, in no way be compared to the scholarly study produced by A. S. Morton. Hill has made use of only secondary material. No new research has been undertaken and no new interpretation attempted. This is not necessarily a failing for Hill's intention is to write a popular history. His purpose is narration not analysis.

The early chapters on the fur trade, the Selkirk Settlement, Louis Riel and the Disturbances of 1869-70 are adequate though conventional and routine in treatment. It is when he approaches the story of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the homesteader that Hill show us his true forte. With these subjects his narrative assumes a new and exciting pace. Here the literary artist is at work and the intensity of feeling for his subject exhibited. He never hesitates to express personal, forthright opinions. He writes well and he writes vividly, perhaps, some may feel, at times tending to romanticize. Rarely in the literature of the west will the reader find the isolation and loneliness of the prairie settler more pointedly depicted.

Hill's talent is not in telling us anything new about the building of the railway or the settlement of the west. The source material with which he has worked is accessible and familiar. The events, the personalities, and the "colour" stories are well known yet nowhere will the reader find a better account of the development of the ethnic mosaic which still persists in the Canadian west. Hill's talent is not that of the research historian but rather of the imaginative, creative artist blending traditional colours into a new and powerful canvas.

If there is a criticism of the book it is that Hill may have attempted too much for the Canadian reader. He has

not succeeded in fitting British Columbia smoothly into his narrative which is basically the story of the central plains. He has not, as far as can be determined, previously written about Canadian history. He appears to have come to the study of the west seriously for the first time, excited no doubt, but lacking the judicious ability to eliminate any story or event of his discovery. He has consulted and used almost everything—perhaps, one suspects, because he is directing his work at an audience in Britain. Unfortunately, his concentration on secondary source materials has resulted in certain defects. A number of debatable contentions could be cited—and, regrettably in a work of such value, a long list of errors in fact compiled. Hill has not made use of specialized studies in particular fields nor has he been a careful writer. It is more pleasant, however, for this reviewer to recall not these defects but rather the sympathetic and eloquent story he has told.

PORTRAIT OF A PERIOD: A Collection of Notman Photographs

Edited by J. Russell Harper and Stanley Triggs. McGill University Press, Montreal, 1967. $20.00

Reviewed by Malvina Bolus

The most beautiful reproductions of photographs that we have seen are to be found here. Lithographed by a specially developed process the richness of tone and quality of detail are unexcelled. And what a collection they represent! The period was principally the latter part of the 19th century and Notman was a superb master of photography, without the aid of exposure meters, compact cameras, fast film and the modern appurtenances of the trade though he was always ready to try new methods and equipment.

William Notman was in his thirties when he emigrated from Scotland to Montreal in 1856. His first employment was with a dry goods store, his line of business previously when he had been parentally discouraged from becoming an artist. He had however been an amateur photographer and he soon opened a studio, which prospered from the start. In the ensuing years he achieved international fame. Involved in the firm at various times were his younger brother and his three sons, two of whom took over the business on his death in 1891. Notman branched out to different cities and employed a large staff who worked congenially together and maintained the very high standards that had been set. In this connection one cannot help feeling that the Notmans would have liked the prints in this book to be cleaned up, as they would assuredly have done. In some cases marks on negatives mar a picture, but it was the deliberate policy of the editors neither to crop nor to retouch any of the plates (except for one cracked glass negative) so that there could be no question as to their authenticity or the original composition of the photographer.

Though the primary business was in studio portraits, the versatility of the Notman firm was remarkable in spite of the problems posed by glass plates, portable darkrooms and so on; outdoors or indoors, blizzard or sunshine, portrait studies or groups of Indians, shipping scenes and logging scenes, crowded market and silent church—all were treated with a mastery that is only rarely exceeded, and samples of each are in this volume.

The editors have provided a history of the Notman firm, with descriptions of some of the techniques, and notes to the plates which give details about some of the notabilities and scenes portrayed.

It is an unwieldy book ($10\frac{3}{4}''$ by $14\frac{1}{2}''$ and heavy) such as almost to sink the coffee table on which it may repose but such is the enjoyment it offers to those who would browse in pictorial Canadian Victoriana that the purchase of a lectern as an accessory might be justified.

THE SALMON PEOPLE

By Hugh W. McKervill. Gray's Publishing Co., Sidney, B.C., 1967. 198 pages, bibliog. $5.80.

Reviewed by Douglas Leechman

When a man who was once a commercial fisherman writes about salmon, he may well prove worth listening to. In this case the author, Hugh W. McKervill, might have justifiably produced his book under the banner of "The Salmon People by One of Them", for he has made the salmon industry of the Pacific Coast his particular study from its early days among the Indians up to yesterday.

It is a pitiful story, another instance of a fallacy that man falls foul of again and again. The salmon are so numerous, the old timers used to say, that you could cross the river on their backs, a truly illimitable resource. Illimitable? No; no more so than the buffalo, or the passenger pigeon, or the forests, or the mines. Greedy, covetous men did their best to prove the old timers wrong, and very nearly succeeded in exterminating the salmon in their eagerness to make a fast buck.

Fish were caught in the millions and left to rot because the canneries could not keep up with the fishermen. In the old days, the Indians had used nets and basket-work weirs, taking all the fish they needed to carry them through the winter, smoking and drying them as a precaution against want, but never depleting the schools to the point of extinction. Then came the white man, the most dangerous predatory animal the world has ever known, with bigger nets and more deadly traps, with Iron Chinks and endless production belts, at every river mouth.

Inland loggers ruined the spawning beds, railroaders created impassable rapids, pesticide men poisoned the waters. Government stepped in, attempting to bring the carnage to a halt, imposing regulations, some helpful, some based on misapprehensions, conservationists howled for tighter regulation, wild life organizations pleaded for restraint, and still the canneries turned out their enormous packs. Even today, when the truth of the situation is all too evident at last, the salmon are not safe. We can only hope that some of those directly responsible and in a position to take effective action will read this most readable and well-documented book and then be moved to do something about it. Faced with man's cupidity and man's stupidity, the salmon desperately need help, now.

Should another edition be contemplated, perhaps the author will have a chance to go over his copy again and cut down on the number of minor slips. "Skid row" for "skid road", not just once, and from this author of all others! Floundered for foundered. hoards for hordes, vermillion, catastrophies, and a number of other biffs irritate the reader.

THE OTTAWA VALLEY AND THE FUR TRADERS

This story of early days in the Ottawa Valley, published in The Beaver, Spring 1966, is now available as a 20-page pamphlet, price 75 cents.

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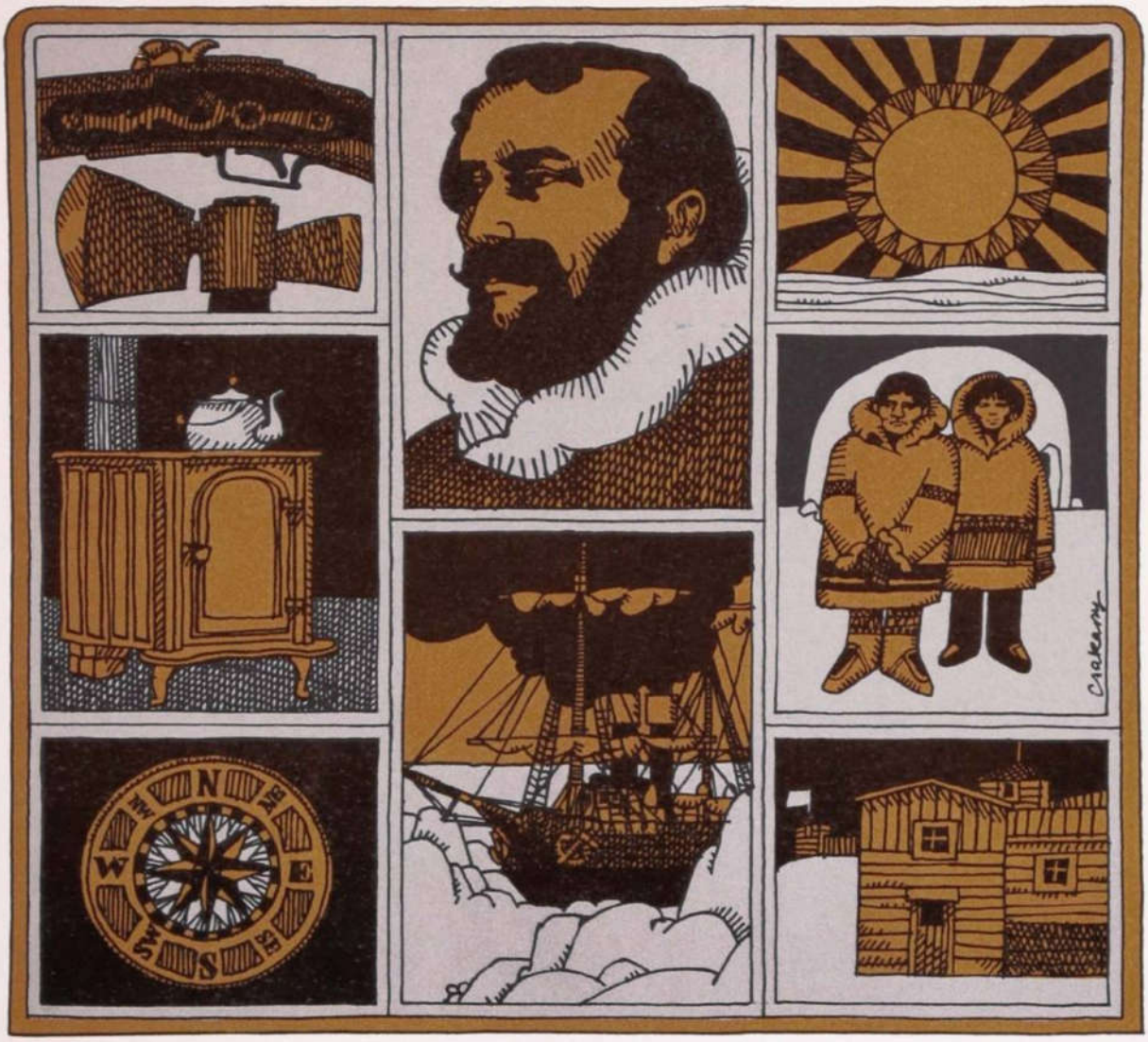

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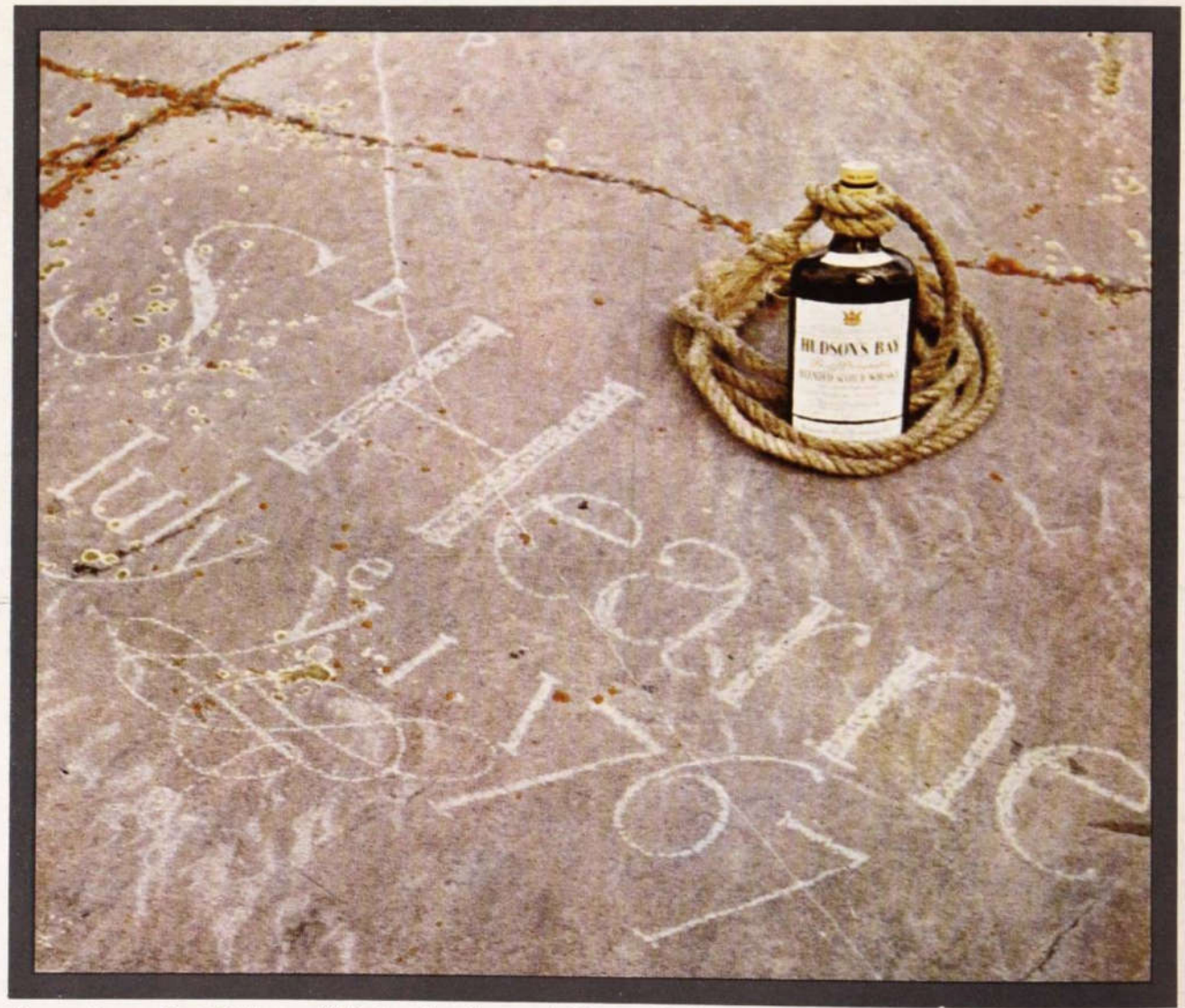

It was from Fort Prince of Wales that Samuel Hearne left on his famous Coppermine Journey and it was there too that he left his name a hundred years to the day before the Confederation of Canada.